Reconceptualising urban food security: an analysis of the everyday negotiations of food access in Lusaka, Zambia

by

Frances Davies

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Supervisor: Dr Gareth Haysom
Co-Supervisor: Prof Sophie Oldfield

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Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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Integrated abstract

This study calls to attention the everyday experiences of what is an increasing urban food insecurity crisis in southern Africa. It draws on a wide literature review and in-depth qualitative work conducted in Lusaka, Zambia. A critical assessment of the dominant food security agenda in southern Africa is discussed in reference to the grounded understanding of a food insecure family living in an impoverished neighbourhood in Lusaka. Illustrations of the deeper empirical context of urban-scaled food insecurity are examined from a feminist food systems perspective. This enables the identification of the gendered embodied experiences of crafting food security in the inequitable urban environment. Individual agency shapes alternative food security strategies that contain purpose, meaning and identity, beyond simplistic notions of food access and consumption. The study speaks to the lived reality of negotiating food security, which is currently unrecognised, and in some cases occluded from dominant patriarchal and neoliberal-centred food security perspectives. In contribution to theory, it is argued that the embodied everyday life realities of the inequitable urban and global food system need to be taken seriously and established as the departure point for setting food security agendas.

This study is presented in the form of two journal articles. Article one, titled *Money for eating: Everyday urban food insecurity in Lusaka,* highlights the importance of agency as a food security determinant in the micro-relational spaces within and between households and food networks. In this sense, agency is both created, and implicated in, the crafting of daily food security. The study exposes how the grand narratives of the global food security discourse are disconnected from, and often contradict, the negotiations and dynamics of food security on the ground. Article two, titled *Urban food security: rethinking Lusaka's food system*, builds on the findings expressed in the first article. It discusses how everyday urban food security strategies are contextual and relational – time- and place-bound. It explores how urban residents' actively negotiate layers of power and inequality embedded within urban food and structural systems. This article argues that urban-scaled food security responses and their underpinning food system governance processes need to find ways to support the critical agentic interactions that are deeply enmeshed within the daily lives of urban food-system actors. In both articles, literature from outside of the narrow food security discourse is used because it better supports the conceptualisation of the everyday reality of urban food insecurity experiences and the inclusive urban food system governance processes needed to deal with the cumulating urban crisis. This broader literature review and a finely grained ethnographic reading of everyday food insecurity offers an alternative paradigm for urban food security work in Zambia and the wider region.

Keywords: Urban food security, food agency, gender, everyday life, food inequality, African food systems, food governance, urban food systems, Lusaka, southern Africa, food ethnography.

Geintegreerde opsomming

Hierdie studie werp lig op alledaagse ondervindige van die toenemende voedselonsekerheidskrisis in Suidelike Afrika. Dit put uit ’n wye literatuur-oorsig en deeglike kwantitatiewe werk wat in Lusaka, Zambië, gedoen, is.’n Kritiese evaluering van die dominante voedselsekuriteitagenda in Suidelike Afrika word bespreek met verwysing na die gegronde begrip van ’n voedselonsekere familie in ’n verarmde buurt in Lusaka. Illustrasies van die diepere empiriese konteks van voedselonsekerheid op ’n stedelike skaal word vanuit ’n feministiese voedselstelselperspektief ondersoek. Dit stel die identifisering van die verpersoonlikde geslagsondervindings van die praksering van voedselsekuriteit in die ongelyke stedelike omgewing in staat. Onafhanklike agentskap vorm alternatiewe voedselsekuriteitstrategieë wat doel, betekenis, en identiteit het; bo en behalwe simplistiese idees van toegang tot en verbruik van voedsel. Die studie spreek die werklikheid daarvan aan om voedselsekuriteit te onderhandel, wat tans onerkend is, en in sommige gevalle van dominante patriargaal- en neo-liberaalgesentreerde voedselsekuriteitperspektiewe uitgesluitword. In bydrae tot die teorie, word daar geredeneer dat die verpersoonlikde alledaagse werklikhede van die lewe van die ongelyke stedelike en globale voedselstelsel ernstig opgeneem moet word en as die vertrekpunt vir die opstel van voedselsekuriteitagendas gevestig moet word.

Hierdie studie word in die vorm van twee joernaalartikels aangebied. Artikel een, genaamd “*Money for eating: Everyday urban food insecurity in Lusaka*”, beklemtoon die belang van agentskap as ’n beslissende faktor vir voedselsekuriteit in die mikroverwante ruimtes binne en tussen huishoudings en voedselnetwerke. In hierdie sin word agentskap beide geskep en betrek by die praksering van daaglikse voedselsekuriteit. Die studie onthul hoe die hoofnarratiewe van die globale voedselsekuriteitverhandeling los is van, en dikwels teenstellend is tot, die onderhandelinge en dinamika van die basis van voedselonsekerheid op voetsoolvlak.

Artikel twee, genaamd “*Urban food security: Rethinking Lusaka’s food system*” bou op die bevindinge wat in die eerste artikel uitgedruk is. Dit bespreek hoe alledaagse voedselsekuriteitstrategieë konteksgebonde en verwant is – tyd- en plekgebonde. Dit ondersoek hoe stedelike bewoners aktief die mag en ongelykheid in stedelike voedsel- en strukturele stelsels onderhandel. Hierdie artikel redeneer dat voedselsekuriteitreaksies op stedelike skaal en hul onderliggende voedselstelselbeheerprosesse maniere moet vind om die kritiese agentiese interaksies wat diep binne die daaglikse lewens van stedelike voedselstelselspelers lê, te ondersteun.

In beide artikels word literatuur van buite die noue voedselsekuriteitverhandeling gebruik, aangesien dit beter ondersteuning bied vir die konseptualisering van die alledaagse realiteit van stedelike voedselsekuriteitondervindinge en die inklusiewe stedelike voedselstelselbeheerprosesse wat nodig is om die toenemende stedelike krisis op te los. Hierdie

wyer literatuur-oorsig en ‘n fynere etnografiese oorsig van alledaagse voedselonsekerheid bied ’n alternatiewe paradigma van stedelike voedselsekuriteitwerk in Zambië en die omliggende gebiede.

Sleutelwoorde: Stedelike voedselsekuriteit, voedselagentskap, geslag, alledaagse lewe, voedselongelykheid, Afrika-voedselstelsels, voedselbeheer, stedelike voedselstelsels, Lusaka, Suidelike Afrika, voedsel-etnografie.

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

AFSUN:	African Food Security Urban Network
AGRA:	Alliance for the Green Revolution of Africa
DESA:	Department of Economic and Social Affairs (United Nations)
NEPAD:	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NORAD:	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NRF:	National Research Foundation
ReNAPRI:	Regional Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes
UN FAO:	United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization
WFP:	World Food Programme

1. Introduction

Food is a quintessential human need. Large proportions of southern Africa's urban dwellers are chronically and acutely food insecure and malnourished due to a multiple array of determinants, including, but not limited to, the effects of poverty (Frayne, Pendleton, Crush, Acquah, Battersby, Bras, Chiweza & Fincham, 2010; Crush, Frayne & Pendleton, 2012). Not only do high rates of food insecurity and malnutrition have negative effects on a country's development prospects, but they furthermore have complex ripple effects throughout broader socioeconomic systems (Battersby & McLachlan, 2013; Frayne, Crush & McLachlan, 2014). Food insecurity reduces the capabilities of individuals who then compromise to a greater degree on their livelihoods, relationships and own physical and emotional wellbeing. The often chronic state of diminished wellbeing also has intergenerational effects that reinforce the cycle of poverty. Children born to food-insecure mothers, for example, are more prone to stunting and the associated potentially lifelong negative developmental consequences (Joubert, 2012; Shrimpton & Rokx, 2012).

There is increasing global attention paid to the issue of food security. Despite the widespread acknowledgement that there is "enough food in the world today for everyone to have the nourishment necessary for a healthy and productive life" (World Food Programme [WFP], 2015), dominant food security policy remains focused on hunger as a problem of production and availability of food, as opposed to access. This limited perspective has driven the global responses and developmental agendas focused on food insecurity accordingly. In so doing it has also obscured the broader failures of the wider food system (Lang & Barling, 2012; Misselhorn, Aggarwal, Ericksen, Gregory, Horn-Phathanothai, Ingram & Wiebe, 2012; Fukuda-Parr & Orr, 2014).

Currently a small number of powerful corporations strongly influence the workings of the global food system as well as the conventional responses to food security (Barker, 2007; McMichael, 2009). As concentrated control over the food system increases, along with rapid urbanisation of the poor, access to food in the urban setting is increasingly governed by global market mechanisms and has resultant complex local impacts (Crush & Frayne, 2011a; Patel, 2012a; Otero, Pechlaner, Liberman & Gürcan, 2015).

Greater understanding is required as to how wider transitions affect local food geographies – particularly the implications for the 'foodways' (social, economic and cultural practices and desires related to accessing and consuming food) of the urban poor who are critically vulnerable to food insecurity (Cohen & Garrett, 2010; Crush & Frayne, 2010a; Alkon, Block, Moore, Gillis, DiNuccio, & Chavez, 2013; Tacoli, Bukhari & Fisher, 2013).

1.1 Study rationale and research aim

Two underlying flaws in the food security discourse motivate the core rationale for this work.

- The current global approach to food security is biased towards rural production and ignores the more complex array of socioeconomic and ecological problems that exist in diverse manners at multiple scales and spatialities throughout the food system (Crush & Frayne, 2011a; Lang & Barling, 2012; Battersby, 2013).
- Following on from the above there is a distinct lack of understanding of the growing challenge of urban food (in)security in southern Africa. This includes an omission of the multifaceted ways in which the urban poor experience, and differentially negotiate, the embodied everyday reality of accessing and sharing food (Maxwell, 1999; Crush & Frayne, 2010b; Dodson, Chiweza & Riley, 2012).

The narrow dominant food security perspective, prominent influence of corporate and non-African-driven agendas and lack of empirical work on this issue leaves little basis for any alternative attempts to develop local food security responses in support of the most vulnerable to urban food insecurity.

The aim of this research project was therefore to contribute towards filling the highlighted gap in food security literature. This works offers an in-depth analysis and conceptualisation of the nuances of everyday urban food (in)security in the contextual setting of Lusaka, Zambia.

1.2 Research objectives

The above rationale for this project informed two overarching research objectives, the first leading into the second. Together these objectives form the basis of the questions asked and the conceptualisation of ideas explored in chapters two and three.

1. To investigate and inform the conceptualisation of how nuanced urban food security is negotiated at the intra- and inter-household scale in the context of impoverished urban southern Africa.
2. To contribute to a new paradigm of food security work that speaks more appropriately to everyday urban food security realities and which better supports the strategies the urban poor employ, as a critical part of addressing the systematic causes of the bourgeoning food insecurity crisis.

1.3 The conceptual framing

An initial detailed literature review informed the overarching framing of the research project. In order to respond to the aim and address the identified gap in literature, qualitative research was employed as the primary research methodology.

Ethnographic research was undertaken over six months in 2014/15, in Lusaka, Zambia with the purpose of capturing the articulations of what everyday urban food insecurity means in the lives of those who negotiate it. Lusaka was selected as a contextual basis for this discussion because the

fast-growing city and its evolving food system present an interesting case study for the food security discussion in the region (Abrahams, 2009; Crush & Frayne, 2011b). As regional and global markets consolidate and fuse with local markets and food systems, there is a variety of new and contextual outcomes. A limited number of studies present work on the changes occurring in Zambia's agrifood system and more specifically in that of Lusaka's (Porter, Lyon & Potts, 2007; Mason & Jayne, 2009; Tschirley & Jayne, 2010).

Household-scale studies have been undertaken in Lusaka and the wider region and while useful, these offer limited insights into the everyday and relational scale that this particular research project aimed to study (Frayne et al., 2010; Mulenga, 2013). The second reason for selecting Lusaka as a research site was that I was familiar with the city. The process of gaining access and 'doing' ethnographic research was thus made easier and enabled greater understanding of the contextual nuances. A study set in the Lusaka context thus made both theoretical and logistical sense.

The findings that emerged from this qualitative research challenge the dominant food security discourse. In order to speak to a different conceptualisation of food security from that which is encompassed in mainstream policy and developmental agendas, this study accesses literature from a multitude of disciplines to better frame and represent the findings of the fieldwork. This literature brings together discussions drawn from the more limited work on local and feminist food geography, anthropological arguments for the recognition of everyday life experiences and concepts of agency and power, African food system governance theory and urban literature. The grounded experiences of urban food insecurity and the daily lives that are given voice in this study, together with the threads drawn from different theoretical lenses, support the conceptualisation of food security from its basis of a dynamic integrated food-human system that recognises individual agency.

1.4 The study outline

I have elected to submit a two journal article thesis as the research component in fulfilment of this Master of Philosophy degree, in accordance with Stellenbosch University's requirements.[1] I have chosen to submit the two-journal thesis as the subject matter is topical and relevant; it is more likely to be read and thus contribute to the debate around food security interventions if written for and hopefully disseminated to a broader audience.

The study, entitled *Reconceptualising urban food security: an analysis of the everyday negotiations of food access in Lusaka, Zambia,* aimed primarily to contribute to fulfilling an identified gap in literature. Both journal articles, by aiming to fulfil the two research objectives, contribute to this overarching aim.

[1] For the purpose of submission to Stellenbosch University in fulfilment of an MPhil degree, both journal article one and two are presented in this dissertation in the style requirements of the university, as opposed to the individual journal styles.

Article one (chapter two) addresses the first research objective. It presents an empirical discussion of food security at the scale of everyday life in an urban southern African setting. It reveals the purposeful actions and individual agency that are implicated in food security strategies in the daily context of poverty and layered inequality. It contributes to the conceptualisation of the agency articulated in everyday life that is intricately involved in negotiating food security. In turn, this work exposes the contradictions and disconnections found between daily realities and the current patriarchal and prescriptive grand narratives of the food security agenda and developmental praxis.

Article two (chapter three) addresses the second research objective. It follows on from the findings of the first article, recognising the disconnections and contradictions between current dominant policy and praxis, and the daily realities of food insecurity. In the second article I present an initial discussion for a new paradigm for the understanding of urban food insecurity; one that better embodies the structural urban food insecurity crisis and its contextual distinctions. It calls for the recognition of how everyday food security strategies shape and are shaped by the surrounding urban structural system. An acknowledgment of this means that place and scale matter: that there are connections between the broader food system and urban consumers, who are citizens with agency and collective strength.

Both articles are presented as traditional research papers, with supporting literature, empirical research and discussion. The style was selected purposefully in preference to the more common presentation of a literature review in article one and a case study in article two. It was deemed that this structure made better use of the research findings and helped contribute to the identified gap in literature. Due to the chosen article style, a brief review of the overarching literature explored further in journal articles one and two is therefore presented in chapter one. I acknowledge that there are repetitions within this structure through the required reiterations of methodological explanations and conceptual framings. Concerted effort has been made to limit repetition throughout the four chapters without compromising the content or quality of the two journal articles.

Chapter one continues with an introduction to the literature, an outline to the methodology employed in the research project and the scope of the thesis. This introductory chapter acts as an entry point to the more focused discussions in chapter two and three. Chapter two is presented as journal article one: *Money for eating: Everyday urban food insecurity in Lusaka, Zambia.* It is proposed that this article be submitted to the *Development Southern African* journal.[2] Chapter three, titled *Urban food security: rethinking Lusaka's food system* is proposed for submission to *Urban Forum*.[3] Chapter Four concludes this thesis and discusses recommendations for further research.

[2] *Development Southern Africa* publishes articles that broaden the debate on the key developmental changes the region faces and has published a number of the key articles that this paper draws from and the conversation to which it aims to contribute. Articles are published in UK English spelling, using the Harvard referencing style and are no more than 7 000 words in length.

[3] *Urban Forum* was selected as this journal has offered a platform for a greater diversity of food security discussions that often challenge conventional discourse. It has published work from empirical research, discussion on everyday life, gender, and wider food security issues in southern Africa and Zambia. It limits articles to 18 pages in length and uses the Harvard referencing style.

1.5 The overarching literature

Different academic disciplines have interrogated the different aspects of 'food' (including food culture, nutrition and health, power, economics and security) at the theoretical level. What is pertinent in the 'food crisis' of today is that many from different backgrounds are calling for better interdisciplinary and integrated approaches to food analysis and insecurity responses (Pottier, 1999; Lang & Barling, 2012; Misselhorn et al., 2012; Battersby, 2013; Frayne et al., 2014). The argument is for policy and development theory that considers and accommodates the complexity of the differentiated sociological, ecological and political-economic dynamics that underpin local contextual production, distribution and consumption systems more appropriately (Smith, 2003; Ericksen, 2007; Crush & Frayne, 2010a; Drimie & McLachlan, 2013). It is also a call for local and micro-scaled anthropological work and health/nutrition-focused food security responses that pay greater heed to macro-level structures that influence ethnographic spaces and the outcomes of food systems (Pottier, 1999; Mintz & Bois, 2012; Battersby, 2013; Frayne et al., 2014). Pottier (1999) states that previous anthropological work on the subject of food and food security has been confined within narrow or ideological development theories; crudely stated, as either strictly Marxist or blindly liberal approaches. These restrictive perspectives are unable to perceive the danger of using 'silver bullet' approaches in the real world, or unable to appreciate how human agency reproduces itself in vastly differentiated ways across the world. Both food security theory and anthropological studies that have looked more broadly at food security in southern Africa have done so largely from a rural livelihoods-agrarian perspective; once again missing the finely grained stories of the reality of the urban crisis. The dominant food security discourse is briefly introduced and reviewed below. Alternative and wider theory that more appropriately speaks to the qualitative research findings and which is developed in chapters two and three is introduced, but not expanded on in chapter one.

1.5.1 Food security theory

The most commonly cited definition of food security is from the United Nation's (UN) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO): 'a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life' (UN FAO, 1996). This definition is commonly perceived as resting on four premises: the availability of food; people's accessibility to this available food; its utilisation; and the stability of the accompanying complex set of interactions over time (Frayne, Moser & Ziervogel, 2012). As levels of food insecurity and malnutrition rise, and systematic failures in the global corporate food system are exposed, a number of broader definitions of food security have been adopted in different literature. Rocha (2008) extends the definition of food security by calling for recognition of five 'A's' regarding food: availability, accessibility, adequacy, acceptability, and agency. This acknowledgement of the importance of agency within food security outcomes is often lacking. The concept and its place within the food security discourse is explored further in chapter two.

Ericksen (2007) provides a useful framework (see figure 1 and 2) through which food security can be better conceptualised by recognising that it does not present in a uniform manner, but rather as a complex system (Cilliers, 2000). A food systems framework provides an important tool with which to view food security as a dynamic system with active players that influence complex outcomes. Socioeconomic and ecological feedback loops interact in this complex system and together determine food security outcomes at multidimensional scales, varying both temporally and spatially (Battersby, 2012a; 2012b). It can thus be understood that complex dynamics affect the stability and sustainability of a given food system, which is locally and globally connected, and this, in turn, determines contextually situated food security results (Frayne et al., 2012; Misselhorn et al., 2012; Tacoli et al., 2013). A systems perspective allows for a deeper understanding of the complexity in which global and local food security issues must be analysed and points to the dangers of reductionist approaches.

A critical element is highlighted in a systems perspective of food that is not captured in the narrow definition of food security and the resultant policy and praxis. Despite the importance of food production (and its sustainability within the food system), agriculture is often only a minor determinant of food security outcomes. Local and global food systems are increasingly commodified through the ongoing determined processes of industrialisation, globalisation and marketisation. The growth and concentration of power in the food system, particularly in the retail industry, has meant that food security is now largely determined by off-farm and non-local elements (Patel, 2012b; Rosin, Stock & Campbell, 2012). A systems perspective illustrates how a particular food system is defined by the manner in which the different elements within the system are connected and how they interact. If there are breakdowns or bottlenecks in the system, food security is compromised – despite the presence or potential for adequate production and food availability. Those who control food system activities define food system outcomes. Within the global, commodified and market-led food system, those who hold power play a substantial role in defining local food security outcomes (Pimbert, Thompson, Vorley, Fox & Tacoli, 2001; Smith, 2003; Thu, 2009).

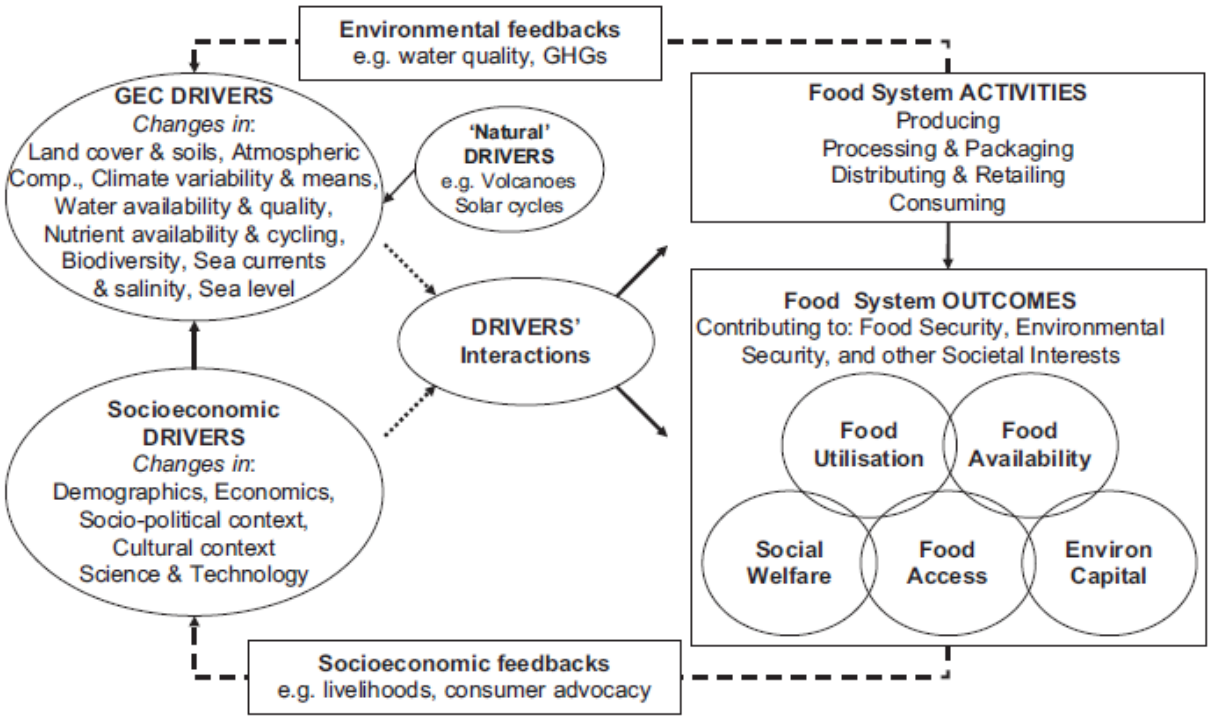

Figure 1: Food systems and their drivers
Source: Ericksen, 2007

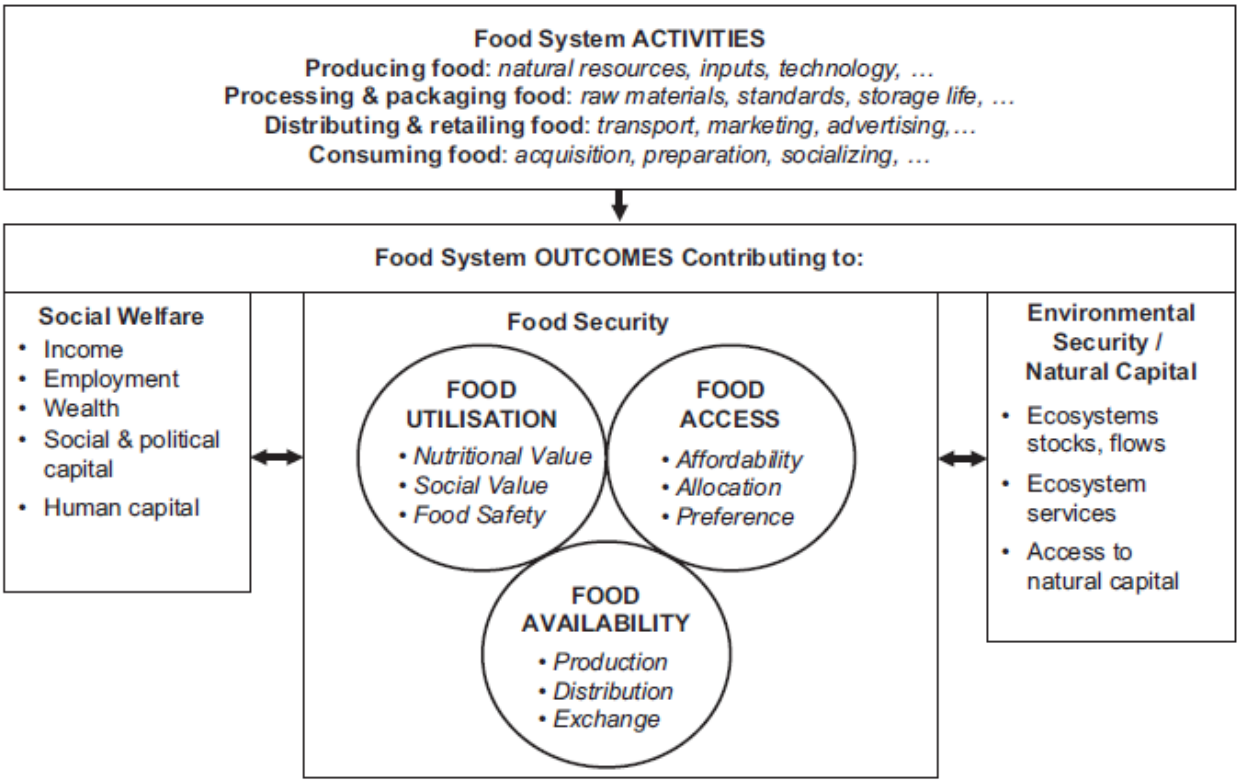

Figure 2: Components of food systems
Source: Ericksen, 2007

The crux of the food security debate is that although there may be enough food produced at any given moment and available on the market, this does not necessarily ensure access, stability or adequacy and thus by no means guarantees food security (Frayne et al., 2014). The extreme levels of food insecurity reported are situated rather within broader structural framings (Crush & Frayne, 2010b; 2014; Battersby, 2012b).

Food systems discourse forms part of a broader theoretical discussion. Of interest are the historical trends and transitions associated with agriculture and food. Shifting demographics and governance regimes correspond to particular time frames and food systems. I briefly discuss the literature that looks at concepts of food regimes, urban transitional theory (particularly the current transition occurring in southern Africa), the subsequent dietary transition, and more recent theory on food system governance. Another layer that requires appreciation in order to understand the current transitions in urban southern Africa are the rising, rather than decreasing, levels of inequality, which relate to historical and political trends and that critically affect food insecurity and malnutrition rates.

1.5.2 Food regimes

The concept of food regimes provides a framework for understanding historical periodisation and defining trends that shape the global food system (Friedmann & McMichael, 1989; McMichael, 2009). Food regimes analysis looks at agricultural and food systems in relation to the expansion of capital and considers that change is brought about by the tensions between social actors, states and capital.

The first food regime covers the era of colonialism spanning from about 1870 to the 1930s and the second follows on from World War II and is typified by industrial agriculture and start of the food aid programmes (Friedmann; 2005; Burch & Lawrence, 2009). The 'third food regime' is distinctive of increased centralised power, financialisation, and adoption of 'neoliberal diets', throughout what has become a globally connected food system. The third food regime rests on the basis of increasing privatisation and commodification, corporate control and global and local consolidation of agricultural systems and their markets. A food regime is framed by the surrounding political economy. There is contestation over whether the current global food system represents a second or third regime. The continued substantial influence that subsidies play in the United States and the European Union is more distinctive of the second food regime; however, the increasing presence of liberalised markets and the push thereof in the global south, and lack of subsidies represents a third food regime more closely (Burch & Lawrence, 2009; Otero et al., 2015).

Recent work that uses food regime framing explores how the global food crisis is evidence in itself of the need for regime change (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; Swilling & Annecke, 2012; Sage, 2013). During the 2008/09 financial crisis food prices escalated at the same time as greater recognition was given to intensified resource scarcity, environmental destruction and climate volatility. This period coincided with rising oil prices, increased production of biofuels and a global increase in land grabbing (McMichael, 2009; Cohen & Garrett, 2010; Ruel, Garrett, Hawkes &

Cohen, 2010). In the light of climate change and altering demographics, it is reasoned that the fourth food regime will need to transition away from the current industrial, capitalist and fossil fuel-based food system towards one that is more adaptive and more socially and ecologically sustainable (Swilling & Annecke, 2012). Many proponents of regime change argue for a transition towards agroecology and food sovereignty (Holt-Giménez & Altieri, 2013), which encompasses the "right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems" (Food Secure Canada, 2015). Although this shift should not be understated, it still reinforces the current bias of the food discourse towards production.

At the same time as the food system is rapidly transforming and exhibiting systematic failures, there are significant shifts occurring in global demographics. There is therefore not only need for a regime change, but also a need to focus on other trends and transitions that are concurrently occurring and which play out in local contextual ways. One of the most critical to southern Africa's future is the urban transition.

1.5.3 The urban transition

As the global food system is revealing its lack of resilience and systemic failures, the urban transition in southern Africa propels forward (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs [DESA], 2010). Merely the rate at which this transition is occurring is reason for concern.

To add to this, Pieterse and Parnell (2014:1) aptly state:

> *Not only will the continent give birth to thousands of new towns and cities as it crosses the 'magical' 50 per cent urban threshold shortly after 2030 (UN DESA 2011), the absolute growth of population and the increasing concentration of Africa's people in cities will transform the landscape of the urban hinterlands as demand for building material, food, energy and water escalates.*

The increasingly urbanised population will need to access food from, and participate in, an urban rather than a rural, food system. What differentiates this transition from that in other regions is not only the speed at which it is occurring, but that it reflects increases in poverty and inequality levels (Mehta, 2000; Kessides, 2005; Ravallion, Chen & Sangraula, 2007). The general trend in many southern African countries from the time of structural adjustment has seen a decline in public funding for social security, increasing economic liberalisation and increasing livelihood precariousness (Pieterse & Parnell, 2014). Social security and support has been transferred to the responsibility of the community, household and individual scale (Dodson et al., 2012). With increasing numbers of poor urban dwellers this has significant effects in undermining the capital asset base of poor households. As urban food security is highly dependent on livelihood security, income and social security, this has direct implications for households' vulnerability to food insecurity (Dodson et al., 2012; Hart, 2009).

The urban transition in southern Africa is taking place at the same time as the fragility of the global – and commodity-driven – food system is becoming apparent. Although there has been some relief in certain food prices since the 2008/09 price spikes, the overall and long-running trend of food price increases continues and affects rural and urban households in complex ways (Lang, 2010; Swan, Hadley & Cichon, 2010; Webb, 2010; FAO, 2015). Increases are often at above inflation levels, particularly for key grains and staples. Food price changes are known to impact the poor most significantly – and particularly those urban dwellers who are net food purchasers (Ruel et al., 2010). In southern African cities, an increasing proportion of the population are chronically and acutely hungry and malnourished (Crush & Frayne, 2014).

In conjunction with the evolving urban transition, increasing food prices and experiences of chronic hunger, a significant proportion of global food is wasted. Quantitative estimates of food losses vary from 10 to 50 per cent (Parfitt, Barthel & Macnaughton, 2010). What is pertinent in this discussion is the link between how much food is wasted, and the continued global notion of food scarcity, questions of feeding growing (largely urban) populations and the continued framing of food insecurity through the lens of food availability. Attention is thus diverted away from firstly the causes of food waste; often in globally integrated and market-driven agrifood chains, and poor investment in local food system infrastructure. And secondly, from the other underlying causes of food insecurity; of food access, acceptability, adequacy and agency. The deeper aspects that affect food security play a critical role in the urban food environment. The dominant food availably focus reinforces international and local agendas motivating for increasing production as a primary response to food insecurity (Crush & Frayne, 2011a).

Global levels of food waste contribute to the notion of food scarcity and the continued framing of food security with limited reference to food availability. The food regimes perspective sheds light on the underlying reasons for the continued trends that frame food insecurity non-differentially in both urban and rural areas as issues of availability. This obscures the potential to address the failures in the broader structural urban food system, particularly urban citizens' inability to access adequate available food.

1.5.4 The nutrition transition

Global trends occur in conjunction with and affect trends and transitions in the local place. The third food regime, driven by increased food system consolidation and industrially produced food, has implicit and explicit effects on the local place. There are significant and complex outcomes of the converging third food regime and the urban transition underway in southern Africa, and specifically for this study, in Zambia. Among others, Battersby and McLachlan (2013) argue that the current industrial food system in combination with the way cities are built (recognising historical legacies) and continue to function, are making people obese and sick. Global levels of the 'hidden hunger' of joint obesity and chronic malnutrition continue to rise exponentially, particularly in the growing

impoverished spaces of urban southern Africa (Shrimpton & Rokx, 2012; Frayne et al., 2014; Metelerkamp, 2014).

The 'nutrition transition' was originally recognised as the process whereby diets shift to fattier, sweeter and greater processed foods as societies become richer and more sedentary (Popkin, 1998). The framing of health responses was and still often is directed at the level of individual responsibility (Frayne et al., 2014; Fukuda-Parr & Orr, 2014). The nutrition transition occurring in urban southern Africa, however, has been shaped according to local contextual factors. Urban diets have indeed shifted to high-energy processed foodstuffs, but because of both increased affluence and the presence of structural food poverty (Popkin, 2011). The structural urban environment in conjunction with the structures of the urban food system is found to play a crucial role in shaping consumers' food choices and driving the change in diets (Battersby & McLachlan, 2013; Battersby & Payton, 2014; Frayne et al., 2014). The nutrition transition triggered within entrenched urban food poverty has similar looking symptoms of obesity and non-communicable diseases as the outcomes of the nutrition transition occurring in other contexts. In order to adequately address these widespread and chronic issues in the local place, however, a very different set of systematic responses are required.

Nutrition issues have been afforded much more recognition within the urban domain than food insecurity (see the United Nation's Scaling Up Nutrition Programme as an example). There is a relatively new discourse that calls for greater recognition of the interlinkages between nutrition insecurity and the broader framings of systematic food insecurity (Battersby, 2013; Battersby & McLachlan, 2013; Frayne et al., 2014). This body of work questions the impacts of the coalescing of a structurally inequitable environment that reinforces bad diets; rising poverty and decreased food purchasing power; in correlation with a lack of inclusive food system governance (or systematic planning) and appropriate health responses; determined market-oriented media and a rapidly transforming food retail sector. The multiple and complex interlinking dynamics frame the vividly high rates of obesity, non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, and chronic and acute levels of malnutrition that are documented throughout the region's urban landscape.

1.5.5 Responses to food system failure

Literature emerging in response to the evident failures of the food system argues for the (re)appreciation of firstly, the geography of food – of scale and locally scaled food systems, their actors and their contextual outcomes and, secondly, of the overarching governance mechanisms that (potentially) play a definitive role in shaping the local foodscape and the ways local actors interact with this system. I briefly introduce these two discussions below.

Battersby and Crush (2014) and Peyton, Moseley and Battersby (2015), among a growing number of theorists, use an expanded conceptualisation of the approaches offered in northern food deserts theory to explore the geography of food insecurity and rising malnutrition in southern African cities.

Battersby and Crush (2014:149) offer a definition of African food deserts as “poor, often informal, urban neighbourhoods characterised by high food insecurity and low dietary diversity, with multiple market and non-market food sources but variable household access to food.” An African food deserts concept takes into consideration local context, framing the intersections between the spatial, structural and social determinants to food access and consumption. This allows for a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which urban residents differentially interact with the urban food system. It also exposes the systematic inequalities within this system that increase vulnerability to food insecurity in particular relation to poverty.

An African food deserts conceptualisation exposes how food is often widely available in the African city, but the “complex nexus” (Battersby & Crush; 2014:149) of interlinking dynamics shape appropriate nutritional access and utilisation. Sociocultural dynamics intersect with structural determinants of food security, shaping the foodways of urban residents and their choices around food access and consumption (Shaw, 2006; Cooke, 2012; Alkon, et al., 2013). The growing body of urban food security literature gives examples of the complex interlinkages within the African food desert. It illustrates how food choices and consumption circumstances vary widely within and between households in very similar geographical and economic environments. It emphasises the need to better understand cultural identity, changing lifestyles and livelihood options, individual capabilities and the ways in which food is used to reaffirm social status, and how these diverse factors influence food security outcomes. These diverse interlinkages reaffirm how food security strategies and determinants are often contextual, and pertinently different to rural, as well as northern, food security experiences.

The African food deserts literature highlights the daily realities of how the urban transition and nutrition transition manifest. An understanding of local food geographies helps to highlight both the more explicit and often embedded and perverse implications of the structural disempowerment occurring within urban food systems and its effect in increasing vulnerability to food insecurity. Peyton et al. (2015) emphasise the need to interrogate grand theories on urban food security and how food system changes play out in the local place. The authors use the case of supermarket expansion in Cape Town, South Africa to illustrate the need to combine context-specific research on local food geographies and the conceptualisation highlighted in the urban food deserts discourse. The inequitable urban system and the neoliberal food system reinforce the need of the poor to juggle multiple livelihoods, undermine household resilience and embed the cycle of poor nutrition and (consequently) poverty (Dodson et al., 2012; OXFAM, 2014; Otero et al., 2015).

The effects that increasing commodification and corporatisation of the food system have on local foodways occur not just within the economic ‘food affordability’ realm. Multifaceted consequences ripple through complex and wide-reaching networks within the food system and daily livelihoods. The current coalescing in southern Africa of the third food regime exhibiting its systematic failures, yet continuing to tighten its grip on African markets; the urban transition and subsequent nutrition

transition; and increasing urban poverty and inequality make for a unique, contextual and critical urban crisis.

The urgent need for better systematic planning and deliberate shaping of urban food systems in order to benefit rather than disempower food system actors is beginning to be recognised. ‘Food security governance’, or ‘food system governance’ are concepts that are beginning to garner attention.

1.5.6 Food system governance

Cities are shaped by their own particular structural system, contextual food system, residents and governance mechanisms that make up that functional and yet disempowering space (Steel, 2013). It is important to appreciate the connections within particular urban food systems. The complex relationships within the dense fabrics of the urban environment mean that one system has the potential to influence another to an extreme degree. These connections, however, also offer opportunity for intervention, and further to this, ask questions of the scale at which interventions occur. There is a limited amount of work pointing to urban-scaled food system governance and its role in steering the future of the coalescing transitions in the local place (Pereira & Ruysenaar, 2012; Haysom, 2014).

The concept of food security governance has garnered more attention in food system interventions at a global scale and at a national scale in countries in the north than it has in the south (Candel, 2014). It could be inferred that this is due to the main project encapsulated in the third food regime, under which African agrifood markets and food security responses remain driven by international frameworks, with developmental and political-economic undertones. Efforts to transition from the current market-driven food regime towards greater locally orientated, governed and sustainable food systems are garnering support in the north (Watts, Ilbery & Maye, 2005; Wiskerke, 2009). This offers lessons to those envisioning a different response to food insecurity than that offered in the developmental and corporate-led narratives for increased intensive commercial food production, market liberalisation and food system consolidation, which is a strong force driving change in southern Africa.

Alternative food geographies that are gaining strength in the north propose locally oriented food systems that reclaim control of and connection to the different elements within a given system. The aim is to reconnect ecology, agriculture, the local place, direct and indirect food system actors and local forms of governing this system. This envisions integrated and territorial agrifood paradigms (Watts et al., 2005; Wiskerke, 2009). Theory on alternative food geographies highlight questions of the nutritional value of food, of culturally appropriate food, and local food in the context of rising oil prices and climate change. Arguments for greater locally oriented and defined food systems and calls for increased food sovereignty in southern contexts are often misconstrued for promoting local or national food self-sufficiency. Born and Purcell (2006) argue that the local not be seen as a

solution in itself, but as part of a broader systematic response to food system failings. What is significant for the purpose of this research are the opportunities that alternative food geographies offer to relocate the locus of control back to the local place, define what is locally appropriate, and include and support local actors. Food system governance is explored further in chapter three.

1.5.7 Food security theory on the Zambian research context

I conducted field work for this thesis in Lusaka, Zambia. Much of the available reviewed urban food security literature speaks to the southern African context, with limited case studies focusing specifically on food security in Lusaka. The Zambia and Lusaka context are explored more in chapter two and three. An overview of the encapsulating discourse is briefly introduced here.

Zambian policy and developmental praxis frame food security primarily as a rural-production phenomenon (and within this framing there is a significant focus on maize) (Kalinda, Maimbo & Mushimba, 2003; Republic of Zambia, 2004; World Bank, 2007; Chapoto, 2012; Kuteya, 2012). Any discussion of urban food security issues is largely presented through the lens of urban agriculture, individual nutrition responses and the commercialisation and shortening of agrifood chains in order to decrease and stabilise urban food prices (Regional Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes [ReNAPRI], 2014). Responses are often driven by regional and international development frameworks (New Partnership for Africa's Development [NEPAD], 2005; 2012).

The current policy and developmental framing of agriculture and food security in Zambia is heavily criticised (Pinder & Wood, 2003; Moyo, 2008; Crush & Frayne, 2011b; Cardoso, 2013; African Centre for Biosafety, 2014). The drive to commercialise and industrialise local agrifood systems is said to have only minor benefits aside from its primary objective of boosting foreign earnings in the country (Mutamba, 09 June 2015). Fulfilling this objective increases the dualistic nature of agriculture, deepens rural poverty and inequality, and negatively affects consumption and nutrition; in turn, increasing urban migration and disrupting local food networks (Mutamba, 09 June 2015). The more recent and prominent criticism originates from the relatively new body of research that exposes the mega-crisis of urbanisation of the poor and levels of chronic urban food insecurity and malnutrition, which are largely left off urban agendas in Zambia (Crush & Frayne, 2011a; Mulenga, 2013).

The African Food Security Urban Network (AFSUN) is a primary source of peer-reviewed research on the specifically urban food insecurity phenomenon in southern Africa (Frayne et al., 2010). The AFSUN research project conducted household surveys in 11 cities of 9 different countries within the region, Lusaka being one. Much of the research analysis is done comparatively across the study sites. Although the Lusaka study site and its analysis is limited (Mulenga, 2013), it does provide a pertinent entry point for further research analysis. Of key relevance are the comparatively high levels of urban food insecurity found in the surveyed households. Lusaka is characterised by high levels of in-migration and informality with minimal state services and infrastructure (Simatele, 2012; Mulenga, 2013). This is highlighted as the urban economy begins to shift in very drastic ways with the rapid

entry of multinational corporations into every level of the agrifood chain (Abrahams, 2009; Crush & Frayne, 2011b). There is substantial institutional pressure from foreign governments and donors to commercialise small-scale farming, as well as industrialise the agricultural sector to a greater extent to increase export earnings (Havnevik, Bryceson, Birgegård, Matondi & Beyene, 2007; World Bank, 2007; Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation [NORAD], 2012). The effects of industrialisation and formal sector consolidation on the informal sector have been shown to have far-reaching effects on urban food and nutrition insecurity in other cities (Battersby, 2012b; Frayne et al., 2014). Abrahams (2009) and Crush and Frayne (2011b) state, however, that Lusaka's informal economy appears to some degree resilient to these recent changes in the food retail sector. If this will potentially change remains to be seen. The factors that are keeping this transformation from occurring, if indeed this is the case, may be telling of other related processes occurring in the socioeconomic system.

1.5.8 Gender and food security

This research project draws together different theories on the urban food security phenomenon. It provides a view from different scalar perspectives offered within the context of Lusaka, including the micro-individual and livelihoods scale that is commonly addressed from a health and nutrition perceptive. This is combined with the wider framing of the geography of food and food insecurity experiences within the city that relate to structural functioning of the urban food system and how food flows within and between the urban spaces.

A critical determinant of food security that plays a part across the scale of the city is gender (Allen & Sachs, 2007; Patel, 2012a). Gender is known to influence food security outcomes at differing individual, intra- and inter-household and city scales (Moser & Felton, 2010; Reddy & Moletsane, 2011; Dodson et al., 2012; Battersby & McLachlan, 2013; Riley & Dodson, 2014). Gendered dynamics also shape food security outcomes in the spaces in which these scales intersect (Giddings & Hovorka, 2010; Hovorka, 2013).

The AFSUN study on gender and food insecurity in urban households in southern Africa points to the systemic ways in which gender and food security are correlated (Dodson et al., 2012). It also illustrates how simple readings of food security can obscure critical nuances and contextual determinants that influence food security from place to place and between different households. Female-centred households, for instance, are found to be more vulnerable to food insecurity, have lower dietary diversity and to experience more months of inadequate food provisioning. Some female-centred household, however, also managed to attain higher levels of food security relative to income than nuclear or male-centred households (Dodson et al., 2012).

The gendered nature of the dynamics of the food system and its food security outcomes is a theme that runs throughout this dissertation, based on the recognition of its implicit importance particularly within the Zambian context (Schlyter, 1999; 2009a; 2010; Mususa, 2009; Tranberg Hanson, 2010).

1.5.9 Conclusion of overarching literature review

The structure of the urban food system, urban poverty and its dynamics, and food insecurity are closely correlated, but vastly under-researched in southern African cities (Battersby, 2012b; Frayne et al., 2014). This fundamentally influences the policy responses needed. Local food systems are changing rapidly and reflect the trends associated with the third food regime: an increasing dualism and domination by corporate-controlled industrialised agriculture, consolidated retail industries, liberalised markets, and the associated increasing and volatile commodity prices. This process is all too frequently driven by international agendas. The rapid transitions occurring in the agrifood system dislocates fragile, local food networks that lack local and regional backing, but to which a significant proportion of southern Africa's poor rural and urban population are connected as a vital livelihood and food source. The significant rural-urban inter-household food links as well as urban informal food networks are disrupted. Both in-migration from rural poor displaced by limited resources and poverty, and natural urban population growth spur urban expansion, largely in the form of under-serviced and structurally disempowering slum development. The confluence of increased urban overcrowding, climatic vulnerability, failing infrastructure and rising food prices is then negotiated at the individual and household levels. From a food systems perspective, the notion of food security is encompassed by these converging trends.

Everyday embodied food security is ultimately negotiated at the individual and relational scale, in complex ways and based on a mix of dynamic processes. Little is currently understood about how these everyday interactions occur, how food moves through the African city, who it sustains, who it doesn't and why. As Battersby states, there needs to be better understanding of "how people actually navigate their foodscapes" (2012c:155). The above literature and identified gaps frame the further discussions and research presented in chapters two and three.

1.6 Methodology

The principal objective of this study was to begin to articulate the nuances of what it means to be a 'food insecure household' in a context of poverty and informality in the urban environment. As stated above, this conversation is not given the requisite attention and often lacking from the dominant food security debate in southern Africa. Among others, Frayne et al. (2014) and Hendriks (2005) call for new empirical studies to fill this gap in understanding and policy praxis. This requires broad quantitative and qualitative studies that are useful in their ability to be extrapolated further and offer generalisations to the southern African context. There is also a need for in-depth studies that speak to food security from the reality of the micro- and everyday-scale at which it is experienced. The research undertaken for this thesis aimed to capture the reality at this scale of the everyday. It therefore must be clearly stated that this work holds no claim to infer broader generalisations about food security in different contexts. It does nevertheless offer insight into the complexities of the everyday experience of food security – which relate to wider scales. The analytical lens was of and from the micro-scale; offering insights at this scale, but also of how interactions at this scale occur

in relation to activities at the different wider scales (neighbourhood, city, regionally). Therefore, although this work speaks to a particular place and time and from specific contextual interactions, it remains relevant in what it exposes, which can be used to speak back to dominant theory. This is reviewed further in the chapter discussions below.

In order to fulfil the research objectives the empirical study was based on a qualitative methodology in which I drew on a mix of ethnographic research techniques that aimed to capture a 'thick' description (Geertz, 1973) of individual's lived experiences of negotiating food (in)security. Participant observation was used as the primary research tool and was carried out over six months (CARE, n.d.; Lacey & Luff, 2001; Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2005; Tracy, 2011). A research journal was kept that documented this process, my daily interactions and initial analytical insights. Longer conversations and semi-structured interviews with participants were recorded and transcribed. Two focus groups were conducted in order to clarify themes and analysis from observation and interviews (Denzin, 1989; Lacey & Luff, 2001; Mouton, 2011).

The research process involved gaining access to willing participants in one of Lusaka's many informal settlements. Poverty and food insecurity are understood to be related, although not necessarily directly correlated. Hendriks states that "(e)mpirical research is urgently needed to determine the coping strategies of households under 'normal' conditions, identify vulnerable households, and monitor the impact of various shocks and stresses on household food security" (2005:103). Since this theoretical analysis, further empirical studies have emerged; however, as stated, these largely focus on the household scale. It was therefore a specific aim for this research to focus on food security strategies at the intra- and inter-household scale, and to begin to understand potential sites of vulnerability at this scale.

The participants that were selected for this study were from three different households in the same neighbourhood, but all formed part of one extended family. The three matriarchal heads of these households, who were the 'food managers'[4] within their relative spaces, became the central participants in this research. This was largely due to the fact that the family knew I was interested in 'talking about food' – and this is a women's domain in the house. The men of the households therefore drifted in and out of daily life and conversations, but most of my time was spent in the

[4] In the research process, women frequently referred to their role of having to 'manage' for food. The activities that revolve around food access, preparation, sharing, storage, sanitation and nutrition, are roles that women actively engage in, and often claim as part of daily agency and identity (explored more in this thesis). Examples include women speaking of having to 'manage' so they could buy wholesale quantities of food goods like meal meal at the beginning of the month; and of how hard it is if you: "can't manage, then you have to buy every day little it little bit. It's difficult". Talking of savings groups as ways to make money and access food: "Last month we give to Mama Mutamba, so no wonder she managing to start the business. 200 [Kwacha] every month. If you managing in your group, we are looking, are you going to manage everyone…then yes we can manage to pay then we start that month". Loots (2007; 86) uses the term 'food managers' in a similar way: "Women are often understood as the primary food managers in charge of purchasing, growing, cooking and consumption within the home or homestead". The term 'food manager' used within this paper supports an understanding developed more below, that women actively claims roles and identities around their work to provide food and care. This activity is seen as more than merely a part of life and is actively engaged with.

company of one or more of these ladies. During this time I met many of their neighbourhood friends, who joined in daily conversations and agreed to participate in focus groups. For the purpose of maintaining strict ethical requirements, the research process was verbally explained from the outset, and consent given by members of the family as well as the other minor participants. As only one of the participants could read and write, verbal consent was agreed on, rather than the cumbersome and potentially uncomfortable written consent requested. Due to the nature of the research, children were constantly present, but interacted only to the extent that immersive research and being part of the family's lives respectfully requires. Research questions were never directed towards children. HIV/AIDS was also only discussed in conversation where participants initiated the topic and probing around this subject was never conducted.

Extensive discussion, especially from feminist scholars, reflects on the process of doing research, of being both an insider and an outsider, of questions of representation and who has the right to speak for whom, and the importance of reflectivity and positionality (Doucet, 2007; Sultana, 2007; Nagar, 2010). These concerns and deliberations played a significant role in the research process and must be acknowledged. Throughout the duration of the fieldwork, I was conscious of prescribed identities and their implications. Within the impoverished research setting, I was indeed an outsider: privileged, female, unmarried, and pertinently in this case, 'white'. I was fully aware that my own positionality, reflective ability and sensitivity were crucial throughout this process, especially in building rapport and trust with research participants. As expected, although the element of difference between insider and outsider was never completely overcome with participants, as the research proceeded and relationships were built, the space between 'us' did subside. To the neighbourhood, however, I remained the outsider and starkly obvious.

The immersive research period encompassed my time with the extended family as well as separate explorations of Lusaka and the workings of its food system that continued throughout the research and writing process. This involved conversations with people I met socially; purposeful discussion with commercial farmers and international developmental agency workers; and representatives from the multinational agribusinesses based in Lusaka. I used chain referral sampling as a process of picking up knowledge from literature and everyday conversations and deliberately asking questions about this within my more formal research. This was with participants, in semi-structured interviews with the variety of food system actors, as well as at various conferences that I attended over the duration of my studies. More intricate details of the participants, their intra- and inter-household relationships and the research context itself are explored in the methodology and findings in chapters two and three.

1.7 Conclusion

Chapter one has introduced the research project, its outline, the overarching literature and methodology employed. This forms an entry point upon which the following two journal articles are based, and from which I explore the Zambian context, the research process and findings as well the study's contribution to food security discourse. The research was founded on the lives that were shared with me. The findings were built on personal experience in the field, relationships and reading of the landscape – implicit in negotiating ethnographic contexts. I acknowledge the limitations of the ethnographic work that ideally calls for longer than six months in the field. The methodological approach used is interpretive and inductive and thus I recognise might be potentially subjective. As a humanistic-interpretive researcher, I recognise my ideological stance that is continually shaped and was indeed shaped by the ethnographic space and process. I find support in conversations that reflect this stance, as well as that which was raised by the participants and life worlds that were studied and presented in this dissertation. I do so in the hope of contributing to meaningful discussion and ultimately enabling recognition of the lives and agency of those who hold and uphold the building blocks to building more equitable and inclusive urban systems. I draw on Chambers and Moser's (2009) work, in support of my ideological stance and motivation for this research project (Moser, 2009; xiv):

> *Robert Chambers maintains that poverty often becomes 'what has been measured and is available for analysis' (2007). He argues that by focusing only on readily available data, development analysts have often constructed a flawed conceptualisation of poverty that ignores information not easily gathered and quantified. Equally, such analyses fail to include interpretations of poverty, deprivation, and exclusion grounded in the agency and identity of the poor themselves.*

2. Money for eating: Everyday urban food insecurity in Lusaka

2.1 Introduction

Food security is of increasing concern throughout the southern African region. Regional food policies and the overriding developmental agenda focus on rural food insecurity, finding solutions in increasing production, linking small-scale farmers to commodity markets, and enhancing social safety nets (Crush & Frayne, 2011a; Fukuda-Parr & Orr, 2014). This approach is linked to a global political-economic project of increasing commercialisation and corporate control of all aspects of the food system (McMichael, 2009; Thu, 2009). Research documents the effects of this approach in the systematic economic marginalisation and disempowerment of certain sectors of local and global population groups (Pimbert et al., 2001; Barker, 2007). A focus on the urban environment is missing from much of the mainstream debate, along with discussions about the deep manifested crisis of urban food insecurity (Atkinson, 1995; Maxwell, 1999; Crush & Frayne, 2011a). Significant levels of the populations living in southern African cities are chronically food insecure (Frayne et al., 2010; 2014). These same cities also experience the highest rates of urbanisation in the world, largely reflecting an urbanisation of poverty (Mehta, 2000; Ravallion et al., 2007; UN-Habitat, 2007; 2013). In 2012 over 60 per cent of the urban population in sub-Saharan African lived in slums (UN-Habitat, 2013). Because most of the region's population will increasingly live in cities, be net food purchasers (Dodson et al., 2012) and chronically poor, ensuring urban food security is of critical importance.

Ruth Phiri, a Lusaka resident, explains the challenges of this persistent and everyday crisis:

> *Because you maybe find like my neighbour is hungry today… We will help… because we all know what hunger is, we all have kids you know what it's like to have starving children and no cash for that day…. But when you don't have money all the time it's difficult because to be asking everyday it's embarrassing! So people get shy to ask again for money for something to eat, so they just sleep early, no food.*

To engage with food insecurity issues in the urban context it is critical to understand how individuals like Ruth, female 'food-managers' and household heads, negotiate access to food in impoverished and inequitable urban conditions. Among others, Battersby (2012c) and Frayne et al. (2014) recognise and highlight the need for greater empirical work to fill a critical gap in literature and policy, and for a better understanding of the strategies the urban poor are adopting to cope with the multiple stresses of food insecurity. This article is a response to that call. It exposes the finely grained everyday actions and relationships that are implicated in and

drawn on during the act of accessing and sharing food and in the crafting of daily food security in this context.

The argument builds on ethnographic research undertaken with a single extended family in an impoverished urban neighbourhood in Lusaka, Zambia.[5] The UN-Habitat (2013) report estimates that 57% of urban residents in Zambia reside in slums. Using local statistics, Mulenga (2013) claims this figure could be as high as 75% in Lusaka. Key to this study is that an investigation undertaken in 2009 in just two of Lusaka's many impoverished neighbourhoods found that more than 80% of the randomly selected and surveyed households experienced chronic food insecurity; most of them acutely so (Frayne et al., 2010; Mulenga, 2013). The implications of this for everyday life are critically under-theorised and thus often misrepresented. In order to understand how daily embodied acts of accessing and translating assets into food occurs, or in many cases evidently fails to occur, I draw on the experiences and deep reflections of three central research participants: Mma Aggie Phiri, her daughter-in-law Ruth and sister Mma Talrai. These three women are the key food managers within the Phiri family. Their voices and stories, recorded over the duration of the six-month research process, are interwoven throughout this analysis to enable a critical analysis of their everyday food negotiations and realities.

Grounded in the experiences of the Phiri family, this article briefly reviews the food security literature and reflects critically on how meaningful and applicable this is to a food-insecure and impoverished urban family. To demonstrate the gaps in the literature, I explore the deeper layers of the Phiri's food stories and the gendered strategies they enact in order to access and share food. Through these narratives, and drawing on theory from literature outside that of the food security debate, the role that individual agency plays in determining daily food security is highlighted. This is bound within the deeply contextual urban fabric of embedded and embodied power inequities that are continually, consciously and relationally negotiated.

2.2 Bringing the debate home: the Phiri's everyday access to food

Aggie Phiri has lived in Lusaka for most of her life, relocating from her rural home as a young girl after her mother passed away. She is middle-aged, passionately strong in spirit and morale, a key leader and caregiver to her extended family and community of friends; she is permanently employed and "without a man in her life". This makes her "free," as she describes

[5] The qualitative research involved immersive participant observation and semi-structured interviews carried out over a six month period in 2014/15. This informs the 'thick' description presented in this argument (Geertz 1973; Lacey & Luff 2001; Tracy 2011). Interviews were used to clarify analysis with close research participants as well as engage with broader food system actors who were formally sought in Lusaka and at a number of regional and national conferences that were attended. Ethical regulations in accordance with Stellenbosch University's ethics code were strictly adhered to and pseudonyms are used throughout this work to maintain participant confidentiality.

herself; free to be with her children and grandchildren; free from the control of her ex-husband and the constant fear of HIV/AIDS; free to work, eat, live, move, care and socialise as she pleases. She is the proud owner of her now much subdivided house that was built by her two sons. As is the case with most houses in poor neighbourhoods, it was constructed over the years as she could afford each extra bag of cement, sand and drum of water. Her house fronts on the narrow main road and haphazard market centre of Mutenderi M'plots, an unplanned and unserviced informal neighbourhood situated on the immediate outskirts of Lusaka. The central location of Aggie's house offers advantages and disadvantages, suffused as it is in the constant throb of market music and voices, and dangerous at night for a woman alone if the men are drinking in the marketplace. It also, however, offers a good business space and clientele for her son, John and his wife Ruth's, 'russian (a type of cheap local mixed-meat sausage) and chip' shop that operates from the front veranda. It has also enabled Aggie to rent out the front room of the house to someone who runs an Internet café. This rental income now pays for a small two-roomed house down the road for John and Ruth, and their three young boys, which provides Ruth with the independence of her own space that she has always longed for. Aggie pays their rent and occasionally buys them a sack of the staple mealie meal.[6] They must make "money for eating" themselves, each day by selling enough 'russians and chips'.

There is a constant ebb and flow of family and friends through Aggie's house. Her elder, unemployed son Peter, aged 32 years, comes and goes as he pleases between wandering neighbourhood streets in weary attempts to find work. Aggie's young, adopted niece is always present, seemingly caught between youthful play and dutiful household work. Visiting family and friends of all ages fill the rest of Aggie's house – sharing her bed or sleeping on the floor of the unfinished inside bathroom or in one of the back rooms intended for rental. By six o'clock every morning, Aggie leaves to go to work and earn the family's only constant income. Two minibus taxi trips take her to the other side of Lusaka from where she walks the final two and a half kilometres of suburban road from which taxis are barred. Here, in the quiet new suburbia of Lusaka where private security, road, water and waste collection keeps streets clean and the neighbourhood exclusive, Aggie spends her days working as a housekeeper. She intends to move closer to work, but one event after another digs into her monthly earnings.

[6] Staple maize product (commercially milled and usually highly refined, boiled with water and made into a dense porridge, locally called 'Nshima').

Aggie explains:

> *I've got a lot of businesses going on; you have to do many things to manage… It's tough because for me, I'm just ok, but it's just for the family. Every time you think you are coming up, then something happening, again coming down, ah life is tough.*

Aggie juggles her cash income, work, household, her desires and her relationships in order to feed herself and her extended family. This is a process in which assets (financial, social and physical) are continuously renegotiated. They are evaluated and translated into either food or one of the many other daily demands Aggie must manage. This often unnoticed everyday food security reality invisibly binds a number of households over varied spatial and temporal networks, a tapestry that the dominant food security agenda captures only in part.

2.3 The contemporary food security debate

The growing attention to urban food issues is beginning to reveal the complexities of the crisis and its multidimensional causes and consequences. Livelihoods analysis and asset-vulnerability frameworks measure the contextual and variable aspects of household food insecurity. These frameworks recognise the role of capital assets in determining household food security outcomes (Atkinson, 1995; Moser, 1998; Hart, 2009; Casale, Drimie, Quinlan & Ziervogel, 2010; Crush & Frayne, 2010b; Frayne et al., 2012). Gradually, increasing attention is being paid to the systematic and structural barriers to food access within the broader urban environment (Battersby, 2011; 2012c; Riley, 2012; Battersby & Crush, 2014). The emerging literature exposes the temporal and spatial scales of food insecurity experiences and the inequities embedded within food systems that limit access to affordable and adequate nutrition. These arguments challenge the dominant developmental agenda that focuses too narrowly on the rural domain, food availability and the household scale. Based largely on quantitative studies, this emergent discourse poignantly highlights the severity of urban food crisis. In contrast, how this crisis plays out in the day-to-day lives and relationships within households is largely under-theorised.

It has been overtly stated that the urban food insecurity crisis that grips southern African cities stems from issues of food access, rather than food availability (Maxwell, 1999; Cohen & Garrett, 2010; Battersby, 2012c; Crush & Frayne, 2014). Aggie states that:

> *If you don't have cash, mmmm, tough Mama, mmmmm I don't know what I can say. … No eating the whole day, then eat once if you find something. There are many people who are living like this here.*

Sen's work, over 30 years ago, on poverty and entitlements remains key to the urban food security debate, however it still receives limited policy recognition (Sen, 1981). Drawing attention to the existence of famine amid a sea of plenty, Sen highlighted the difference between food availability and the entitlements, capabilities and endowments necessary to translate available food into accessible and acceptable nutrition (1981; 1997). Mma Talrai spends much of her time at Aggie's house, where she shares in the family meals, often with one or more of her grown-up children joining in.

She explains how markets have changed:

> *On the old days we buy in bulk, not like now. It was difficult to find food then in town, so we saving and then you must find the mealie meal and buy a lot, a lot in one time, maybe five bags, have to queue for a long time, fighting to get food those days! Now things are everywhere so you can just buy for today, tomorrow again, tomorrow like so.*

Today staple foods are readily available throughout the city in both formal and widespread thriving informal markets. Nutritious food and a diverse diet, however, are relatively expensive. A 2009 survey found the largest household expenditure by far to be on food (47%) in the surveyed impoverished Lusaka households, with the poorest households spending the greater proportion of their budgets on food (Mason & Jayne, 2009). Food-insecure households are also found to consume a very limited range of food types (mostly cereals, vegetables and sugar) (Mulenga, 2013). The level of inadequate dietary diversity is higher in Lusaka than the regional average for multiple, contextually based reasons (Frayne et al., 2010). Buying food 'for today' is often the norm as household strategies often provide only enough to feed the family on a day-to-day basis. Ruth states that "If we don't do business one day, then we won't have food at home that night. That's how it is." Ruth's statement echoes de Waal's (1990) work: Individuals and households in contexts of chronic and acute poverty may choose to not eat, or greatly limit food consumption and change their household consumption patterns, in the conscious act of preserving assets for the future. Although food is widely available throughout the urban environment, people may deliberately choose to not translate assets into immediate food access as part of a longer-term food and livelihood security strategy.

Within local political economies and under the structures of the global food system, it is how and what type of food is produced, packaged, processed, distributed, accessed, consumed and disposed of that influence local food security outcomes. Viewed from a systems perspective, food security is the product of contextually variable factors with ecological and socioeconomic feedback loops, spanning diverse and fluctuating spatial and temporal dimensions (Ericksen, 2007; Misselhorn et al., 2012). It is ultimately defined by the

sustainability of the food system as a whole. Food security is however also lived and embodied. It is a reality that is negotiated at the micro-scale within families and households across varied neighbourhoods and sociocultural contexts, spanning wide-reaching temporal scales. Sen's principles published in 1981 remain at the core of the urban food security challenge today; that "urban food security is not, and has never been, simply an issue of how much food is produced" (Frayne et al., 2010:7). This is a reality clearly understood and illustrated by the Phiri family.

2.4 Everyday crafting of food security in Lusaka

In order to understand urban food security and how choices and trade-offs are made to access food, I argue that we need to pay attention to the ways in which households, and the individuals within them, weigh up and negotiate the multiple risks and possibilities of their particular context. These are continuous processes that are enacted every day. These are ingrained in relationships negotiated between individuals, within families, households and communities, with varying degrees of power, capabilities, desires and needs. How do individuals and food managers within households juggle their contextual environment, including trading off assets and food with medical care, living with HIV/AIDS, having a partner, a secure home, maintaining friendships and dignity, and sending children to school? Time spent with the Phiri family reveals these relational dynamics and the costs that inextricably intertwine households. Aggie, for instance, has the agency to negotiate her own assets, a position she has strategically crafted for herself. Her current monthly salary could ensure her 'food security' in the basic meaning of this contested concept. In reality, however, she chooses to support many others. This is a strategy she considers an essential part of her own long-term security. The deeper sociological part of the Phiri family's story of lived urban food insecurity is not recognised in the current food security discourse and it is disregarded from policy support. How and why these choices are made determines daily food access, yet it is these realities that the current food security literature and policy debate too often occlude. Contextual, deeply relational, gendered, dynamic and often ambiguous, these everyday individual and collective activities and their meanings are difficult to make visible and quantify for policy response. I explore the deeper layers that make sense of the daily lives of food managers below, beginning with Aggie reflecting on her life and its logics.

2.4.1 Gender and food

Thinking about how her access to food has changed, Aggie describes:

> *That time* [seven years ago] *was so hard… that husband Alex was such a good man, no any problems for shouting, for money, what what. … [He was] just only too jealous, so just keeping me in the house, no letting me go anywhere, no friends, no family for visiting, not even to going buying food. … He having a good job that side. Just too, too jealous. Even if he come home and finding me just outside in the yard talking he getting too angry! Ah I was so scared! Because he just want to be keeping me like that in the house, but then he going taking other girlfriends what what what. So that's why I just come out of the house one day to running away to my aunty, so she just keeping me that side until he coming down cause [he] was so angry!*
>
> *Ah so that time was so tough! So after some months he looking for me everywhere, then just stop ok now finished. So now I'm free. So I just thank God that today I'm ok. I go to the VCT* [Voluntary Counselling and Testing]*, Mma Talrai just counselling me, but then they say no you are ok! Ah that day I was so relieved! So then I just chose, ah its better just to stay like this, on my own, I'm free with my children, my grandchildren, doing anything I'm liking, go here, do this. So now I'm free. Just only for sugar* [the colloquial word for diabetes] *but HIV, it's ok. So it's better now, to be free.*

For women like Aggie, food and finances are deeply gendered. Drawing on 40 years of work with impoverished households in Lusaka, Schlyter explains some of the deeper contextual nuances within which women in Zambia, as traditional food managers, must negotiate daily food access (Schlyter, 1999; 2009a; 2010). This work captures the everyday lives of individual women affected by a changing political economy, structural adjustment programmes, the neoliberal development of Lusaka and urban life, and the expectations and restrictions of culture, age and gender. Schlyter's analysis draws attention to ways in which power inequalities from macro- to micro-levels, are continuously etched, contested by and lived out in the everyday life, particularly by women.

As the ideological mothers of the nation and authentic bearers of everyday life, Schlyter documents stories of how women were allowed to 'work for food', but not 'work for money' (Schlyter, 1999; 2009a). These patterns continue in modern urban Lusaka, where the provision of food remains largely a women's responsibility.

Ruth explains the extent to which gendered domestic roles persist when she complained about her husband:

> *He can't even make himself that tea, no I must stop for doing what I'm doing, make that fire,*[7] *put the water, the teabag… he can see I'm busy with that washing, but he just sit there doing nothing,* [saying] *'no it's a woman's job'.*

In as much as domestic food is a women's role, money is a man's. Aggie states that it is still difficult for a woman in a relationship to hold formal employment if her husband is not working; "first he must work, then also you can". Otherwise "definitely he will want to you stop, he'll be just complaining every day until you stop".. Because the provision of food continues to be associated with feminine roles and control of finances with male roles, many nuclear household relationships become unequal and fraught with power dynamics.

The risk of living without a male partner implies a likely increased vulnerability to food insecurity (Dodson et al., 2012).[8] On the other hand, living as a single woman can also allow for the enhancing of individual space for agency, for fuller citizenship and independence – financially, socially and bodily (Moser & Felton, 2010; Schlyter, 2009a,b; 2010). The choice Aggie made to leave her husband resulting in her and her family being extremely food insecure for a number of years. Despite this, Aggie describes with joy the feeling of being 'free', financially independent now from her controlling ex-husband and able to make her own food security decisions. Lessons from Moser's (2009) long-term qualitative work in Gauyaquil pertinently point out the complexity of gendered intra-household dynamics and individual choices, echoing the depth at which household food security needs to be understood. Moser explains the importance of "identify[ing] women's agency as directed less at a separatist agenda – aimed at individual autonomy and the rejection of marriage – and more toward reforming the terms of cooperation so that they are more favourable to women" (Moser 2009:162) .

In Lusaka, and indeed throughout the region, food is increasingly a price-volatile, market-dependant commodity. When food access is based on purchasing power, the gendered socioeconomic inequalities that shape household power dynamics over the negotiation of assets for food, and how that food is then shared, are central to determining food security.

[7] Ruth has an electronic stove and kettle in her house, but rarely has enough electricity credits to use these appliances, stating that even though using charcoal takes up a lot more of her time it is cheaper than using electricity to cook.

[8] Studies in Lusaka and the wider region find female-headed households to be more food insecure than male - or nuclear-headed households (Dodson et al., 2012). Through longitudinal studies, however, Moser and Felton (2010) illustrate the complexity of gendered poverty, asset accumulation and income-earning ability of households.

Smith (2003) and Patel (2012a) argue for the recognition of the power inherent in food. Patel (2012a) states that the existence of hunger is about two things: undernourishment, as an absence of the right calories, and food insecurity, that precedes undernourishment and is about violations of basic rights and socio-political configurations that control or lead to this state. Food insecurity therefore can be seen as a lack of control over one's socioeconomic situation. Patel (2012a) links this to the continued disempowerment of women and children and highlights gender-differentiated food insecurity levels.

Allen and Sachs discuss the potential control that women hold as the "gatekeepers" of the "flow of food" within the household and its creation of space for increased power and agency (2007:3). Reflecting on Aggie and Ruth's experiences, when men retain control of the finances and disempowerment of women remains embedded within the fabric of everyday urban life, potential sites of enhanced power can be negated and instead create further subjugation. Responsible for providing food, yet subservient to men as the 'gatekeepers' to accessing money for food in the city, women must create alternative ways to craft everyday food security. This becomes critical in simultaneously fulfilling roles and identities around providing food – and reclaiming agency. Aggie and Ruth explain how the economy of reciprocity exists within their neighbourhood, as one means of accessing food and balancing the multiple demands placed on impoverished food managers.

2.4.2 Economies of reciprocity

> *It's Chilimba* [the local name for a micro-savings group]*. It's from a long time again, we doing it for a long time now! We just make it… ladies working together. This month you work hard, give (money) together (to) one lady, next month you work hard, give again then (the) next lady. Then it will be my turn, the money comes to me. It helps at least you can start something; you want to make a business … especially ladies (working) in the market and also in the houses for food. … Otherwise you can just be getting hungry (and) think today ah I'm just going to eat this money,*[9] *then again tomorrow taking little bit, no selling anything, little bit, until the whole month no even a piece of coin in the house! So that money is like the capital … Otherwise it's too difficult to raise that money for orders (for small businesses), but also to buy food for the house, especially that big (expensive) one like the mealie meal.*
>
> *So one day put money for the orders, then another day you eat, then again for the orders. The chilimba is keeping the business going, because otherwise you are*

[9] Phrase used for using the available money to buy food (in this case rather than saving it in order to sustain the business).

> *panicking every day – ah until I sell I can't take this money to buy food. It's like its punishing to save; you have to sell before you can eat.*

As many women are still restricted by gendered norms – financially, spatially and in employment options – and food provision remains primarily women's responsibility, the ability to engage in the very local informal economy and particularly in food retail, is a fundamental food security strategy. Women may not have the capital or freedom of mobility to seek work within the wider city. The neighbourhood and community economy thus becomes a vital source of financial engagement – an imperative in accessing food. The very small amount of money made in a day is spread among a small community economy of entrusted women neighbours or female family members. As Ruth explains, her business is slow at the moment, because "now it's like everyone is just chasing kwachas, no one has money here at the moment … everyone is saying business is down here now."

The local neighbourhood microbusinesses, lending of money and sharing of food between households and 'chilimba' saving groups form incredibly tightly knit alternative strategies of accessing food and providing care. But as one person's earnings spreads new forms of business, so too does another's loss have ripple implications. Daya and Authar discuss alternative economic spaces and its "potentially emancipatory forms" (Fuller et al., 2010 in Daya & Authar, 2012:887). This relocates agency back to the human with the ability to generate and sustain capital, rather than viewing agency as attributed to the capitalist system and capital itself.

2.4.3 Reclaiming agency

Within the everyday urban impoverished life of both restriction and freedom, the acts of accessing and sharing food become meaningful spaces in which agency is created and livelihoods crafted. From a simple household analysis perspective, Aggie's food security prospects could now look good: she receives a secure small, but relatively good salary and owns her own house, which is shared only with two others on a permanent basis. A deeper understanding, however, reveals her continuous act of juggling food access with a multitude of variable demands emanating from the relationships in her daily life. Aggie's assets – her household, income, relationships, autonomy and the everyday decisions that surround these and which determine her food security – are contested and fluid. Her food security is shaped by factors external to her household and encompasses past and present relationships, events and broader security strategies.

Aggie's ability to share creates meaning in her life; family, friendship and broader community relationships are of critical importance. To the outsider these relationships appear taxing, but to Aggie, they are a long-term security strategy. Ruth and John, together with their three young

boys, as well as Aggie's sister and her five children all live in different households, yet their everyday food security is reliant on Aggie. In time spent with Aggie, not a day passed when she didn't receive a phone call from a member of her extended family, 'greeting her', asking to come and stay, for her to visit a nephew in jail who is only receiving one meal a day, to help with a kitchen tea of a distant relative, to discuss a funeral, a birth, a wedding, a new business plan or the sharing in a micro-saving group. Aggie's ability to share the little she can is an important part of daily life and her own expression of agency. Care through food provision is central to these interactions and being able to do so provides meaning for Aggie.

Despite how closely related Ruth and Aggie's lives and access to food are, their different positions and capability to assert individual agency means they make very different food security decisions. Ruth explains:

> *It's difficult as the woman because even it's like we running the business together, I'm the one having to stress how I am going to feed the children tonight, even to buy diapers for Raymond for the night, John never thinking about that. Last Christmas I managed to save 900 [Kwacha], but then he just said no I want to go to the village, so I can't say anything, he just take that money and go. I just have to be quiet. So every day I'm just having to make that budget again and then you'll find that sometimes business is quite low for that day, or that month.*

Ruth's position within her relationship leaves her with limited capabilities to negotiate her own and their joint assets. Her main daily concern is to care for her young children and her own long-term security. She is highly dependent for this on her position within her marriage and the support of her mother-in-law.

To maintain these she must at times compromise her own desires and aspirations. John has the final say over how money is spent and thus she must find other ways to assert her food security decisions. Ruth has a close relationship with her cousin, Florence, who helps with housework, childcare and running the business. In exchange she receives care from Ruth and cash for the things "women need, like creams and those sanitary pads". Their relationship is a long-term security strategy for them both. Ruth explains:

> *If I had that money, I would have sent her to high school... because I know later, when she's grown up you'll find that I'm gone* [passed away]*, definitely she will look after my children for me. So I would send her before the boys.*

Female relationships of reciprocity stretch over time and space and are important food security strategies, as well as spaces in which gendered agency can be expressed.

The daily accessing and sharing of food is based on the negotiation of agency; caught up and continuously contested in the juggling of capital assets, social and sexual relationships, positionality, aspirations, pain and joy. The individual everyday choices and trade-offs, as well as the relative autonomy held in order to do this, is an implicit part of food security. It is a deeply relational and power-fraught process – explicitly contextual and difficult to quantify. Discussed above and in broader literature, food security theory recognises the importance of food availability and the household capital assets necessary to access food. In the most part, however, it fails to recognise how assets are translated into food – and what types of food – for everyone or only some within a household. Many food managers in impoverished households in Lusaka may not have the power to negotiate their assets; the food availability-household assets-food security nexus becoming about agency and power, rather than a technical procedure. Different assets mean different things to different individuals. Although Ruth had made enough money to ensure a smooth transition to the new year, protected against unforeseen costs and a food-insecure month, she lacked the power within her relationship to assert her decisions over how money was spent. A particular household's collective capital assets may technically amount to there being enough money for food every month for all household individuals, but assets are not translated into food without negotiation.

2.5 Conceptualising everyday food insecurity

In contexts of poverty and gendered inequality, where women as food managers have limited authority over household finances; money that could equate to food instead equates to a new television, a girlfriend, an early marriage, (forced) sex, another child, or the loss of autonomy. At the same time, one household's income could also mean support for extended family members, for neighbours, for shared food.

Discussing assets and poverty, Moser states that the "effect of gendered power relations on the inclusion or exclusion of certain actors with respect to aspects of social capital has remained invisible" (Moser, 2009:68). She argues for the recognition of intra-household dynamics, of not only gender and age as sites of inequality in access to, and use of, resources, but also of the critical role of individual agency. Furthering Sen's work, Nussbaum (2003) explains this in terms of entitlements and capabilities, criticising the 'normative' understanding of growth and development, as different people need different entitlements to reach the same level of capabilities. Development measured as a "state or condition", as with food security measured as a household state, "understates the importance of agency and freedom in the development process" (Nussbaum, 2003:34).

Agency interpenetrates the food system and determines the continuous interaction and reciprocation between various actors, activities, structures and outcomes at multiple scales

that influence food security at any given time. Despite the recognition of the role of agency in poverty and development work, the agency involved in determining food security outcomes – of how people actively negotiate the power and structures that interlace the food system at multiple scales – is largely missing from food security discourse.

The limited amount of food security literature that does recognise the concept of agency in determining food security outcomes does so from varying perspectives. Rocha uses the concept of agency at a broader governance level, defining agency as the "policies and processes that enable the achievement of food security" (2008:1).[10] Contrasting Rocha's notion, Etzold, Bohle, Keck and Zingel (2009) use a grounded individual concept of agency. The different discussions of agency and food in itself illustrate the multiple scales at which food security is influenced. Etzold et al. (2009) consider informality, particularly informal food, to be an expression of individual agency in contexts of power inequalities. This work draws on Giddens' (1997) understanding of the concept of agency; "(a)ctors can make choices, they can negotiate their available options, adapt their position and they can challenge the institutions which in turn structure their actions" (in Etzold et al., 2009:7). Mirroring this understanding, Payne (2012:400)[11] speaks to the concept of 'everyday agency' not as a "new view of agency", but rather a call for a new perspective of agency rooted in "people's own perspective of their lives". Payne (2012) states that the daily realities of people's own experiences are not necessarily viewed and expressed by them in discourses of crisis or seen as extraordinary coping mechanisms. "'Everyday agency' therefore refers to the expressions of agency perceived [by children and young people] to be a part of their everyday life, even though these actions frequently go against the grain of what is considered socially and culturally appropriate" (Payne, 2012:400). Payne's work supports the conceptualisation of agency as it is understood in this research, as being expressed through food managers, such as Aggie and Ruth's everyday strategies of accessing and sharing food, and providing care.

In much discourse, agency is viewed as 'thin', 'constrained', or 'tactical' in contexts of poverty or unequal power relationships and spaces, which undermines individuals capacity to 'exert agency' (particularly over sexuality, livelihoods, aspirations) (Bordonaro & Payne, 2012). Without condoning spaces of inequality or suffering, this literature argues that agency is subjective.

Payne (2012) illustrates the need to acknowledge individual's grounded everyday agency; and in doing so, admit that people are "conceptualised as competent social beings: 'doers'

[10] Unpublished, but cited in Lang and Barling (2012) and Haysom (2014).
[11] Informed by qualitative work in peri-urban Zambia with child-headed households.

and 'thinkers' rather than social becomings" (2012:402)[12]. For Aggie, Ruth and Talrai, the ability to access and share food is an important expression of agency and identity. These everyday acts are embodied and enmeshed in relationships that are often unequal and fraught with power. Also bound within this is the ability to have children, maintain relationships of reciprocity and friendship, occupy certain spaces within the 'modern' city, maintain a home, express their beauty or sense of fashion, work long hours in an informal market, or provide care. Bordonaro and Payne (2012) explain that the food strategies of marginalised street children and leaders of child-headed households are an essential part of what provides meaning in their daily lives; being able to access food and look after themselves and others is an important claim to agency and identity. These are critical elements of the food security conundrum.

With reference to food security discourse and policy direction, viewing food managers as passive recipients of developmental, or corporate-controlled food programmes, rather than as active agents and 'social beings', is inherently patronising. Normative understandings of access to food as a technical process, through corporate food systems, in supermarkets, formal trade, urban agriculture, or food aid, occlude daily food security strategies that already exist, and that are deeply entrenched, embodied and contain meaning. Narrow and patriarchal food policies undermine and devalue food managers' everyday expressions of agency. Schlyter's (2009a) work on citizenship and women's rights adds to continued feminist literature calling for acknowledgment of, women's in particular, everyday strategies that enable the creation of meaning. Even within contexts of suffering, restricted autonomy in unequal relationships, and structural disempowerment, means of creating and expressing agency are crafted through relationships, rituals, occupying sociocultural spaces and social lives (Schlyter, 2009a,b). Accessing, preparing and consuming food are, as stated, part of everyday life, part of this creation of meaning. The strategies that are involved in this human need and ritual are not disembodied acts, but important expressions of agency.

From the grounded evidence of the Phiri family and their relations, the regional agenda that finds solutions to food insecurity in increased production, market control and commodification of foods through the industrial food system, does not provide useful support to enhancing food access strategies in the urban environment. Externally derived, production-biased or market-orientated food security approaches fail to recognise the meaningful expressions of agency and identity that exist around the accessing and consuming of food.

Within the urban structures, food managers with limited power over financial resources attempt to create alternative everyday food security strategies beyond the bounds of the patriarchal

[12] Informed by empirical research with child-headed households in Zambia.

and structurally inequitable urban food system. These strategies are embodied in access to food, care for families and crafting of agency. In order to genuinely address food insecurity at the multidimensional and widespread extent that the crisis requires, the grounded, real and embedded food strategies that impoverished food managers are already employing in order to negotiate the inequitable urban food system need to be taken seriously. This could be key to solving the urban food and malnutrition crisis that the region faces.

2.6 Conclusion

Food is a commodity in the urban environment. Food forms the basis of complex and embodied economies that are embedded in families, neighbourhoods and sociocultural contexts. These are often caught up and subject to the whims of the mercurial and crisis-ridden industrial food system. How agents with limited resources negotiate this terrain from day-to-day is overlooked within the functioning of the neoliberal 'modern' city and development project. Ultimately the nuanced and ambiguous everyday actions involved in attempts to access food rely on the human being – on individual agency. The individual and collective crafting of food security is not a disembodied and meaningless process, but one that is embedded in everyday lives in socio-political structures; it is deeply gendered and relationally negotiated, forming and transforming a relentlessly harsh and contested urban food terrain. At the end of the research process, John, Aggie's son and Ruth's husband, found a well-paid job and the family celebrated joyously. John's very much improved financial position has the potential to change the family's lives. I ask Aggie if it will, if things will change considerably now. She replies "yes, it is so good now, everything ok … but we still try to help, if the peoples are asking definitely you must try to share. It's good to help… they is helping us last time, now this time if we can manage, going like so helping each other". The everyday acts of sharing shape the Phiri's lives. Accessing and sharing food forms the basis of relationships, positionality, survival and individual meaning.

This paper responds to the call for a grounding and broadening in thinking about urban food security. Under the current global agrifood regime, food insecurity levels cannot be solved by increasing entitlements alone. Social safety programmes can potentially make an individual food secure for a given period of time, but they do not address the original systemic causes of disempowerment. Food security as a standalone policy goal will not address the socio-spatial and economic inequalities that exist within the global food system and that caused food insecurity in the first place.

As Patel (2012a) describes it, malnutrition is a manifestation of a lack of the right kind of food. Food insecurity is a broader phenomenon of the surrounding context in which hunger has manifested – the failing of social, environmental and political economic governance that drives

the global and local food systems. Broadening the understanding from calories, production and household income separates the discussion from finding solutions in food fortification, social safety nets and urban agriculture. It opens up room for understanding the complexity within the food system; the different spatial and temporal scales at which food insecurity exists, the inherent power inequalities, and the individual reality of it. Drawing on the Lusaka context as a useful case study in southern Africa and deep qualitative analysis, this study grounds the urban food security debate in a deeper conceptualisation of the meaning of everyday food security.

3. Urban food security: rethinking Lusaka's food system

3.1 Introduction

> *It's like when he getting angry, like mostly how can I say, he hasn't left enough money for you to cook chicken, just some vegetables. Then in the house, he coming back, (and shouting) 'no why haven't you cooked chicken'? Even though the money he left wasn't enough to cook the chicken you wanted!* (Ruth Phiri, Lusaka resident, 2 July 2014).

This paper discusses the findings of a qualitative ethnographic research study that looked at everyday life in an impoverished neighbourhood in Lusaka, Zambia through the lens of food. Two broad themes emerged. One is of the reality of negotiating urban food (in)security at the individual and relational scale. The second is that the nuances of food security negotiations at the micro-scale are shaped, and, in turn, shape, food system dynamics at other scales, particularly the city scale. The argument developed below discusses this second theme. It firstly aims to gain recognition for the different and intricate scales at which the food system 'works'; of how everyday interactions within the urban system are contextually influenced and how the effects thereof play out in food security outcomes reproduced across the city. Doing so supports a conceptualisation of the reality of urban food insecurity in everyday life in Lusaka and highlights the incongruity between this reality and prevailing food security theory and praxis. The recognition of the contextual connections within the local foodscape and lessons drawn from broader epistemological framings offer the possibility of imagining an alternative food geography in Lusaka and the wider region.

Historically, urban social and structural development has been defined by food and local food system interactions (Steel, 2013). The way in which food 'works' within the city is still as critical and influential as ever, albeit in vastly different and increasingly opaque ways as corporate control of the food system intensifies (Thu, 2009). Food systems form and function, in combination with the urban system and its governance mechanisms, to a greater or lesser extent to enable the acquisition, processing, distribution, consumption and disposal of food for growing numbers of urban residents (Ericksen, 2007; Crush & Frayne, 2010b; Battersby & Crush, 2014). The high rates of urbanisation, and poignantly, urban poverty (Ravallion et al., 2007; UN-Habitat, 2013), together with increasing chronic and acute levels of food insecurity experienced in southern Africa cities (Cohen & Garrett, 2010; Frayne et al., 2010) draws attention to the evidentially failing urban food system and the bourgeoning food insecurity crisis.

Impoverished urban residents fill the forgotten spaces in the city, categorised by a lack of economic opportunities, inadequate services, limited options for dietary diversity and high transport costs (Pieterse & Parnell, 2014). It is acknowledged that poverty is a broad determinant of food security in that it limits household access to the available urban food (Maxwell, 1999; Crush et al., 2012; Frayne et al., 2014). Beginning to garner attention is that intra- and inter-household food insecurity rates vary within this generalisation and across the city (Battersby & Crush, 2014; Riley & Dodson, 2014). Individual dynamics add layers of nuances to how food security is negotiated on a daily basis (Dodson et al., 2012).

Questions remain as to how individual agency and food security determinants at the intra- and inter-household scale connect with the broader urban food and urban structural system. These questions are based on the acknowledgment that urban food security is indeed poverty related, but that the structural inequalities within the urban system affect citizens' ability to translate economic development into comprehensive improved food security at differing city, household or individual scales. Economic development is not a prerequisite for enhanced household food security and may even introduce new forms of vulnerability in the system (Mitlin & Satterthwaite, 2013; Acquah, Kapunda & Legwegoh, 2014; Resnick & Thurlow, 2014). The wide historical, geographical and sociological diversity of southern African cities results in context-specific food security determinants and outcomes. Urban residents, particularly the poor, are vulnerable to changes in the food system that occur at multiple scales (Ruel et al., 2010; Riley & Legwegoh, 2014). Haysom states that "(t)he food system thus embodies the scale debate, highlighting the hierarchical components but also reflecting that contingent outcome of the tensions between structural forces and agentic practices" (2014:31). This has critical implications for food security responses, which are imperative for the future of southern Africa and currently under-theorised.

The following discussion begins with an explanation of the research context and methodology process that frames the developed argument. The encompassing theoretical perspectives on food security are discussed and then expanded drawing on broader and less popularist debates on alternative food geographies, local food system governance and African urban literature. The wider theory highlights conversations about the urban space – a defining part of the urban food system – which is not always explicitly articulated or recognised in food security discourse. A 'thick' description (Geertz, 1973) of the research findings is then presented and discussed in relation to the broader urban and food debate. The aim of this article is to draw on experiences from the ground and wider theory in order to envision a different paradigm for urban food security work in Lusaka and the wider region: one that takes better cognisance of the contextually shaped local food system and aligns more closely to the daily lives of poor food system actors.

3.2 The research setting and methodology

Zambia, and more specifically its capital city of Lusaka, provides a useful case study that reflects the complex outcomes of food system changes. The deepening dualistic nature of the agrifood system remains embedded in contextual framings of inequality. Local food markets continue to operate alongside burgeoning large-scale commercial retail outlets. The rapid transformation of certain food-related sectors is starkly obvious, particularly with the entry of supermarkets, the growth of shopping malls and fast-food outlets. There has been a deliberate and determined push for agribusiness development and marketed commercial inputs to commercialise the small-scale farming sectors, together with the consolidation of the agrifood industry by multinational take-overs; Zambia is keenly eyed as an easy and strategic base for capturing further sub-Saharan markets (Abrahams, 2009; ACB, 2014; Wilkinson, 2015). At the same time, rapid urbanisation rates in Zambia follow similar trends as those occurring within the region (UN-Habitat, 2013). In Lusaka, high rates of urbanisation are set within the socioeconomic context of rising poverty, inequality and increasingly inadequate provision of public services despite economic structural changes and macro-economic growth (Chibuye, 2011; Resnick & Thurlow, 2014).

In 2008/09 a regionally-based study found 70–80% of households in an impoverished neighbourhood in Lusaka to be chronically and acutely food insecure (Frayne et al., 2010). Households were not only accessing limited quantities of food, but experiencing extremely limited dietary diversity over extended periods of time. Many households had inadequate food provisioning for ten months out of the year. This is in comparison to rural areas that typically experience three or four months of shortage (Mulenga, 2013). Although this study represents only one spatial and temporal framing and says nothing about intra-household dynamics; as at least 57%[13] (UN-Habitat, 2013) of Lusaka's residents live in slums, these results are significant. It also begs the need for further interrogation of Zambia's agri-food policies, the Lusaka food system and its obvious failings. As Myers (2006:306) states "(b)ecause so many compound residents lack basic services and human rights, a search for the roots of the exclusionary politics and differentiation that drive inequalities remains pertinent."

Within this framing, qualitative research was conducted in 2014/15 over six months. The broad aim was to capture the everyday food security realities and food access strategies of the poor, and thus vulnerable to food insecurity, and to use this as the point of departure for informing further food security discourse and agendas.

[13] This is a comparatively conservative figure. Local statistics put this figure as high as 75% in Lusaka (Mulenga, 2013).

In-depth participatory observation was undertaken with an extended family that lived in three different households in Mtendere M'Plots. M'Plots is the informal neighbourhood of 'plots' that stretch outwards from the older residential area of Mtendere on the immediate outskirts of Lusaka. The neighbourhood is relatively new, but it is similar in character to many other impoverished spaces that house most of Lusaka's residents. There is no to minimal structural planning or regular provision of council services. As all informal neighbourhoods are, M'Plots is also unique, based on its contextual nuances, its history, land politics and the collated mix of individuals who make it their home and govern its spaces. I began the qualitative research process in M'Plots by participating in the everyday life of the Phiri family to explore the intricacies of the city and its food. Further to this intricate participatory process, the research involved attendance at a number of national and regional agrifood conferences and conducting semi-structured interviews with food system actors working at all levels of the value chain. This methodological process frames the literature discussion presented below and upon which the research findings are then discussed.

3.3 The urban-scaled food system

Conventional discourse views food security from two perspectives: the national macro-scale and the household scale (Battersby, 2012b; Ecker & Breisinger, 2012; Lang & Barling, 2012; Crush & Frayne, 2014; Fukuda-Parr & Orr, 2014). These perspectives manifest in national food security agendas that are driven by rural and agricultural policies and that focus on food production and food security determinants based on calories per capita. The quantitative values are easily applied to household units, and used as a measure to understand and interpret access to food relative to household capital assets and food availability. There is very limited reference to contextual and spatial framings as well as non-market forms of food access and its utilisation (Misselhorn, 2005; Battersby, 2011; 2012c; Cooke, 2012).

When the urban space is rarely considered due to the rural bias, the rural-orientated perspective is largely transferred onto the urban food security context (Maxwell, 1999; Battersby, 2013; Crush & Frayne, 2014). Households are seen to access available food predominantly via commercial markets and if capital endowments fail, solutions are sought through social welfare systems at the household or individual health scale. A large part of the urban food security discussion turns to forms of urban agriculture as a key solution to poverty-related food insecurity (Crush & Frayne, 2011a; Crush, Hovorka & Tevera, 2011; Frayne et al., 2014).

3.3.1 Framing the food security crisis

Alternative arguments call for a more systematic approach to understanding the geography of food and the widespread experiences of food insecurity and malnutrition (Ericksen, 2007; Ingram, 2011; Lang & Barling, 2012). A food systems perspective recognises the "cross-level, cross-scale and cross-sector" (Misselhorn et al., 2012:7) influences on food security. Empirical work on local food systems in southern Africa is beginning to garner attention. Certain lessons from the longer-term movement in the north in support of local food systems and theory on urban food deserts has been adapted to the southern urban context (Battersby, 2012c; Battersby & Crush, 2014; Peyton et al., 2015). Food deserts theory exposes the spatial determinants of food access and system level flaws that drive processes underpinning food insecurity, rising malnutrition and embedded social exclusion and inequality. Responses from northern alternative food geographies have worked to re-scale local food systems and their control (Watts et al., 2005; Follett, 2009; Wiskerke, 2009). Approaches are largely focused on territorial-scale (often urban or metropolitan) agri-food policy formation as opposed to the current state- or global-scaled policy formation. The aim is to increase integration of direct and indirect food system actors and to form new relations between state and the public sector, the market and civil society (Wiskerke, 2009). Alternative food geographies envision contextually distinct local food systems, purposefully supportive of sustainable development and the creation of new key roles particularly in governance.

Alternative food geographies have not yet developed in sub-Saharan Africa in the same extent and form as they have in the north and they may not be contextually suitable for the region. They are critiqued for their fulfilment of middle-class aspirations and for focusing on food provisioning aspects. This misses implicit structural inequalities within food systems (urban planning, poverty, racism) and the continued neglect and erosion of traditional local food systems (Freidberg & Goldstein, 2011). A similar criticism is made of the usefulness of urban food deserts theory in local contexts that ignores the foodways of the urban poor and informal food geographies already at play (Battersby, 2012c; Battersby & Crush, 2014). The theoretical discussion remains useful, however, in highlighting the role of scale: of contextually oriented food systems, their governance and the need to reconnect place, active agents within these spaces and food security.

Hovorka (2013) offers a southern African perspective on urban food geography – through a specifically feminist lens. Doing so allows for the conceptualisation of the ubiquitous gendered nature of food that permeates all scales of the food system. It exposes the enduring reality of "food as power in its own right" (Hovorka, 2013:125) that lies at the core of society and the inherently inequitable workings of local and global food systems. The implicit connections between gender, power and food within the urban food system is illuminated. Power

differentials exist at each node of connection. Forms of inequalities correspond to the spatial and structural dynamics of the urban system and influence consumer's ability to interact with the urban foodscape (Hovorka, 2013). Dodson et al. state that "(w)ho you are matters because individual demographic attributes such as age, gender, marital and family status combine with class, ethnicity and other axes of discrimination to enable or constrain the individual's means of acquiring food" (2012:2). Layers of inequality shape individual food security outcomes that must be actively and consciously struggled over in the efforts to access food (Hovorka, 2013).

A food systems perspective makes visual the spatial and temporal determinants through which food insecurity arises and is experienced in unique ways in a city space. The different, direct and indirect, food system actors at different scales can be recognised and the dynamics at which food security is shaped and pertinently, by whom and how, conceptualised.

3.3.2 Food system governance

The notion of food security governance is receiving increased attention in the contestations over global food insecurity (Candel, 2014). A broad definition of food security governance is "the interactions between public and/or private entities ultimately aiming at the realization of collective goals" (Termeer, Dewulf, Rijswick, Buuren, Huitema, Meijerink, Rayner & Wiering, 2011:160). Food system governance therefore aims to oversee not only direct food security interventions, but also the surrounding context in which food insecurity is shaped (Candel 2014). This links to developing urban governance approaches that Pierre (2005) points out need to recognise and enhance the role of everyday urban actors outside the institutional walls of local government.

In the global south, food system governance has traditionally been reasonably limited, focused on the shaping forces that agribusiness holds within a local place, and more historically from the perspective of foreign developmental agencies and their role in steering local food security solutions (Abrahams, 2010). Theory originating from the south that supports a broader understanding of food system governance is relatively new.[14] Comprehensive policies and actual praxis is even less common in African cities. What policies are in place all too often undermine local food economies and exacerbate food insecurity (Tranberg Hansen, 2004; Battersby & Crush, 2014). "(M)ost municipalities are ambiguous about the informal food economy. In a neoliberal world, supermarkets are generally free to do business without any significant degree of regulation. The urban informal food economy, on the other hand, is regularly the target of control, regulation and draconian eradication policies" (Battersby &

[14] Abrahams (2010) on Zambia; see Pereira & Ruysenaar (2012) and Haysom (2014) on South Africa. Brown (2014) also illustrates the issues around local urban governance in Uganda. Rocha and Lessa (2009) provide key work from the example of Belo Horizonte.

Crush, 2014:148). The complexity that food security presents cannot be dealt with by current forms of "fragmented institutional architecture" (Candel 2014:596) that pervade southern African cities.

Food system governance is, however optimistically, seen as a, or the, key tool to address global food security issues. It is based on the proviso that governance processes are better "integrated on multiple scales (…) and if all relevant stakeholders were able to engage in collective rational deliberations" (Candel 2014:596). A process of including relevant stakeholders would therefore require that those who are food insecure and operating on the margins of the 'formal food system' in African cities, be legitimately and rationally recognised. 'Informal' livelihoods and the nuances of daily food security strategies outside of commercial marketing systems would need to be understood; perhaps even supported as opposed to undermined, as Battersby and Crush (2014) have described.

3.3.3 African urbanism

There is a sophisticated debate that focuses on the African urban condition (d'Cruz & Satterthwaite, 2005; Pieterse, 2008; Pieterse & Simone, 2013; Pieterse & Parnell, 2014). A significant focus is on inclusive and contextual governance forms similar to those referred to above that aim to better recognise the, at times alternative or 'informal', livelihood strategies of poor urban citizens. Key to the future development and sustainability of inclusive African cities is the role of 'deep-democracy' (Appadurai, 2001) – of bottom-up development that is enacted by urban agents and of the enabling ability of scale and context-appropriate urban governance formation (Pieterse, 2006; 2008; 2011; Swilling, 2011). Pieterse states: "At the heart of this new paradigm is the subversive idea that our greatest resource and opportunity to solve the African urban crisis lies with the people who effectively build the cities through their tenacious efforts to retain a foothold there – the agents of slum urbanism" (2014:204).

This urban literature focuses largely on the structural elements of urban life and discussions of the everyday in contexts of poverty, informality and engrained inequality: elements all critical within the urban food security debate. It is surprisingly silent regarding the role that the food system plays in the city *per se*. Nonetheless, it provokes relevant questions around the development of 'deeply democratic' food system governance and a move towards that envisaged in liveable urban theory – of inclusive, equitable and sustainable cities (Swilling, 2011). Recognising this work saves food security practitioners from needing to reinvent the wheel in efforts to address urban food security at the level of the complexity and cross-sectoral integration that is required.

Pieterse's articulation of epistemic communities as "knowledge-generating collectives" (2006:290) points to the fact that urban citizens and their relative communities possess agency

and can enact their collective agency in the everyday process of shaping identities, relations, neighbourhoods and urban structures. From this perspective, urban food governance mechanisms need to recognise and be shaped by the epistemic communities that best understand the everyday liveable urban structural and food system. They also share a commitment to finding "practicable 'solutions' to intractable social and economic problems" (Pieterse, 2006:290). Haysom (2014) points out that food is one such intractable problem. Food systems that are genuinely responsive to the local context within which urban residents' food security is shaped require the kind of locally defined governance mechanisms that this African urban literature describes. The literature presented frames the below research findings and discussion.

3.4 Food security in Lusaka

An overview of Zambia's broad stance and response to food security illustrates the country's general similarity to the trends described in the literature above. The focus is continually directed to rural areas and it is production-orientated, driven both by the internal political economy as well as significant foreign aid and developmental directives (Chapoto, 2012; NEPAD, 2012; Cardoso, 2013; Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa [AGRA], 2014). The inadequate policy and fragmented responses that do exist miss the widespread experiences of chronic urban food insecurity as well as its individually differentiated determinants and outcomes (Kalinda et al., 2003; Crush & Frayne, 2010b; Republic of Zambia, 2011a; Harris & Drimie, 2012). Gender prejudices are known to be accentuated in the Zambian socio-cultural context; however, only lip service is paid to the effects of gender on food access and broader food system activities (Tranberg Hansen, 2004; Republic of Zambia, 2011b; Bibler & Lauterbach, 2012). Vague attempts are made to address general gender discrimination in Zambia, often through 'gender sensitive' economic-empowerment projects and public-awareness campaigns. These responses remain embedded within deep contextual inequality and leadership that upholds change is limited (Mwale, 2012). The rich research findings discussed below speak back to the de-contextual and dis-embodied framings of food insecurity in Lusaka.

3.4.1 Food in Mtendere M'Plots

Walking through Mtendere M'Plots the role of the intricate and thriving local food system is palpable. The smell of roasting cassava and cooking mealie meal and ground nuts constantly wafts through the dirt and charcoal dust-laden air. Small 'shops' or simply little triangular pyramids of fresh tomatoes, onions, and decanted 50 millilitre sandwich bags of cooking oil displayed at the front of houses colour every street in the haphazard neighbourhood and beyond. Aggie, a primary research participant, is the matriarch of her extended family, largely

because she has a regular income. Her house is more spacious than the other families. It is also well located just off the market and thus where Ruth, Aggie's daughter-in-law, operates her fast-food stall from. It is the central meeting point from which daily life unfolds.

It is an easy walk from Aggie's house to Mtendere central, the main food market and bus stop. Stalls open before light and remain bustling long into the darkness. As in M'Plots and all over Lusaka, food in the Mtendere market is an inherent part of the daily flow of thick activity through the city. Fresh produce appears each morning, arriving in various forms and by different means. Men bring what they can carry on the back of a bicycle. Women come in mini-buses with a sack or two from the main city market. Small trucks deliver produce directly from peri-urban farms. Food of all kinds is sold; either in bulk to other smaller traders or divided up into meal-sized portions for local residents and public-transport users who pass this nodal point in the neighbourhood and then span out across Lusaka on their way to and from work. This process is repeated day after day as food moves in and through the city and its food networks. Although this purposefully ensures produce is relatively fresh and food widely available, competition is high and daily profits for small traders are minimal. Women explain: "you have to sell before you can eat."

Value chains are short, but local produce that is relatively affordable is seasonal and offers little dietary diversity. A greater variety of fresh, processed and protein-rich food is always available in both the main city market, as well as the multitude of new supermarkets that have surged into Lusaka's cityscape in recent years. Only recently is a greater proportion of the fresh produce that is sold in supermarkets grown locally. Most processed goods are still imported and relatively unaffordable to families like the Phiri's.

> *Mostly the women here don't know about the supermarkets, they think it's just for those like higher people… But mostly I go there for the brown bread for Aggie (who is diabetic), it's only sometimes you finding it here (in Mtendere). But those other things, like kapenta and beans, in the market these things will be cheaper and you can see the different qualities how you want, like choosing how much you want. So it depends if you can manage for transport then and if you have money. … if you can't manage for cash, so just trying for 10 Kwacha today, buying at the market, then again tomorrow you have to try to make that budget, so then it's difficult to buy those big amounts from the supermarkets.*

The large commercial retail sector is not a significant source of food for the urban poor (Mulenga, 2013). Gender, mobility, age, knowledge, food type preference and the higher retail prices were reasons participants in this research gave as to why they did not source food from Lusaka's formalised food retail systems.

The local 'informal' food economy, which includes a myriad of networked activities from food harvesting and collection from farms to retail, are a critical livelihood source for poor urban dwellers. This is especially true for women. Women are food producers in the city – in their labour that enables the acquisition, transit, preparation and retailing of food throughout the city. Conversations held with the three main research participants as well as their friends spoke to this on numerous occasions. Some women in nuclear households may also have limited mobility within the city – restricted by access to male-controlled money for transport or sociocultural expectations of married women's independent mobility. When there is no source of cash or food in a household – or food managers cannot access the available cash within a household – the first and primary food security strategy is often: "just try and sell something". Gender prescriptions still often inhibit women engaging in 'work for money'; instead women can 'work for food'. Engaging in the very local informal food sector is a vital strategy to make money – and thus to access food.

On a broader scale, the Lusaka food system is structured and continues to be driven towards the commoditisation of food and aspirations for 'modern' markets. It is, however, still imbued with complex socioeconomic and gendered cultural prescriptions. Ruth's husband explains that it's not good as a man to be seen running a small food stall, "That is a women's job. A man can do those bigger shops for food or electronics." The spatially accessible local informal food market is a critical food security strategy for women as both an income and food source.

Gender prescriptions add layers of determinants to food systems outcomes. Aggie used to be married and lived a seemingly secure life with her ex-husband who was formally employed. As she explained, however, although she was well fed and described him as "a good man, no any shouting for food, what what", she lived in constant fear of HIV/AIDS and she was completely controlled and dependant on his whims. Her husband was unfaithful, and as he was out working and seeing other women, she was confined to the house, because he was "just too jealous". Ruth, Aggie's daughter-in-law, expands on this:

> *Now days it's maybe fifty fifty staying together like this. There are many men keeping the women like this (…); you can't even go to the market to get tomatoes. Maybe the man can go or mostly they send a child. Some friends can come to the house, but others, no allowed friends.*
>
> *If you want to go to buy something, maybe dress for yourself, he won't let you go, must go together. Otherwise just sitting in the house, the whole day! Buying you movies, you must just sit and watch! But these days the police are checking, they are getting strict on this. If they find you (a man) doing this you go to jail for a long time.*

> *But also some women don't go to the police because they say if he goes to jail, who's going to feed you?*

Aggie and Ruth's stories illustrate the deeply gendered, embodied and power-fraught choices and trade-offs that are involved in actively negotiating food acquisition and broader food security outcomes. These are calculated actions that extend beyond household capital assets and urban food availability. Framed by Hovorka's (2013) feminist foodscapes perspective and constituted within the Zambian sociocultural setting that was observed in qualitative research; agency, gender and power are seen to intersect within the realms of food. This is accentuated in the urban impoverished context with its increasingly commoditised food system. Women need "money for eating" in order to access the widely available food from both informal and formal markets. Yet the neoliberal urban political economy is bound by gendered sociocultural framings and structural inequalities that inhibit women's ability to participate in formal or stable employment.[15] The research participant's food security contexts were found to be implicitly shaped by their ability to claim and exert agency in a setting of deeply fraught power inequity.

The rich contextual readings of everyday food security negotiations in M'Plots is used to contextualise the discussion below that frames an alternative conceptualisation for food security responses – one that better speaks to the reality of urban food insecurity.

3.5 Discussion

What became evident from the research process is how often the stories of negotiating food security at the scale at which it is constituted through everyday life are disconnected from the grand narratives represented within the food security discourse. The contradictions between popular discourse and what is raised by voices on the ground pose unanswered questions about urban food insecurity that is bound by national governments, international developmental and neoliberal market agendas. The disconnections are explicitly highlighted below and then discussed in the light of alternative ways of framing the evolving urban form and its corresponding food system.

[15] Also found in Schlyter (1999; 2009a).

3.5.1 Disconnections

Food is widely available in Lusaka and sourced by poor residents through predominantly local food systems. Contrary to popular thought, urban agriculture was neither practiced nor aspired to by any of the participants or other households observed during the research in Lusaka (confirmed in Crush et al., 2011; Mulenga, 2013). Supermarkets were a very uncommon direct source of food. Formalised and consolidated supply chains, that are globally and regionally connected, however, are an integral part of the 'informal' Lusaka food system. Agribusiness supply chains intersect with as well as influence the local food system at multiple and often irregular levels. A unique web of interactions results and these food networks make up Lusaka's foodscape and its ensuing outcomes. The high rates of chronic food insecurity and malnutrition experienced in Lusaka are as a result of a problem of access and not due to issues of food production. Monetary, and, in turn, spatial, access constraints act as broad food and nutrition determinants. However, intra- and inter-household everyday food access is governed by deeper nuances that are contextually embedded within the urban form and are embodied processes. Households are not singular structures in which inputs and outputs can be easily defined. They are fluid, influenced at multiple scales, often turbulent and discriminative.

The intricate negotiations involved in everyday food security strategies in contexts of poverty and informality in Lusaka complicate the simple reading of urban food insecurity. These challenge the current narrow and often patriarchal food security policy and praxis.

3.5.2 The reality of inter- and intra-household food security determinants

Viewing the Mtendere context and the snippets gained of the research participants' lives from a feminist perspective exposed and highlighted the ways in which individual agency and power intersect within food and shape food security outcomes at the grounded everyday scale. Ruth explains that she can take her family to share in the evening meal at her mother-in-law's house whenever she hasn't made enough money that day to buy food for her own home. However, doing so undermines her role as a wife, mother and carer, which she claims in part through her ability to provide food. At her mother-in-law's house, Ruth's children are no longer hers, but their grandmother's. Ruth's status within the family is then lessened. Her little home-run business through which she sells potato chips and sausages is thus extremely important for broader reasons beyond its immediate cash profits. The engrained nuances that exist in accessing food at the intra- and inter-household level intersect with the neighbourhood-scale social capital networks and local food markets. Global to local agrifood system changes and price fluctuations can affect, and must be negotiated by individuals at the relational scale, impinging on finely balanced and vulnerable everyday food strategies.

Hovorka (2013) describes the gendered nature of food and how power and inequality embedded within national and urban foodscapes shape the food security outcomes. In M'Plots, women are often recognised food managers within a household and yet hold less autonomy over capital assets than men. Remaining submissive within power-fraught gendered or generational relationships is traded for other forms of security – such as access to food. Deeply gendered food vis-à-vis capital dichotomies influence food access strategies that are juggled with contextual circumstances. Historical cultural traditions, colonial racial structures, neoliberal inequalities and 'modern' livelihood aspirations complicate food security determinants as they affect urban residents' capacity to interact with the increasingly commoditised and globalised urban food system.

3.5.3 Systematic inequalities reproduced across the city inhibit food security agency

Riley and Legwegoh (2014) illustrate that 'place' and 'scale' matter in food security outcomes. The embedded power inequalities described above are reproduced across the fabrics of the city. What is missing from the discourse and the disjointed food polices that do exist in Lusaka, is an understanding of the broader urban foodscape – of how the urban form shapes food security strategies at the micro-scale and in turn, how agents re-act and shape the urban food system. This speaks to the need to understand how food, poverty, individual demographics and the inequities of the urban structural system connect. And, in so doing, expose the ways these connections potentially exacerbate food poverty. A seemingly overly obvious, albeit relevant, example is presented by the Phiri family. The front room of Aggie's house was rented to an Internet café micro-business. The income contributed to the rent of small separate house for her son and daughter-in-law down the road. The separate space allowed the young couple some form of independence. On a certain day, illegal electricity connections in the neighbourhood were checked by the local energy provider and disconnected. As the front room of Aggie's house now hosted a 'business', her entire home was disconnected until a separate meter was installed in order to log higher business tariffs. The process of saving enough for the new installation, reconnection and journeys to the energy provider's head office on the opposite side of town took three months. The inefficiencies and encumbering urban structures directly and severely affected the entire extended family's lives, reaching over a number of households and affecting their carefully balanced food access and utilisation routine.

There are multiple and disjointed spheres of power through which Lusaka's structural form, its economic systems and its ensuing foodscape are incessantly fashioned and contested (Abrahams, 2010). Power is easily abused at all levels; within and between households, by official and unofficial service providers and leaders, by retailers, market managers and

opposing and incoherent political groups. Urban consumers must navigate this fluid and systematically disempowering urban system to craft some measure of daily food security. This has implications for urban food security responses. Food system outcomes are shaped by the interactions of local and global forces and thus differ from place to place. Changes in the contextual environment affect the calculated agentic actions at the scale of everyday life, within and between households and fluid spaces of the urban form. Current food policies, or the lack thereof, have the potential to undermine or aggravate food access strategies that are critically juggled in contextually bound foodscapes.

3.5.4 The contextually shaped local foodscape

It is clear that urban food security in southern African cities cannot be generalised. Place and scale matter as food systems are shaped by compounded levels of influence that converge at the local place in unique ways. Individual and collective agency is drawn on to navigate a local foodscape and this directly shapes food security strategies. An understanding of the critical role that the contextual food system plays in determining food security outcomes within that particular context, begs questions of changes to the food system that increasingly shift the locus of control of food decisions away from the scale at which it is negotiated and felt.

The changes in food systems of the north to ones that support the local systems are applauded for benefiting local farmers and economies, bringing nutritious food to poor urban dwellers and reconnecting consumers, food and place. In contrast, the south continues to be cajoled into further liberalising its economy and modernising its 'archaic' local food systems. This is often in the name of economic growth, poverty reduction and improving food security (Crush & Frayne, 2011a; Cardoso, 2013; African Centre for Biosafety, 2014). Local value chains and markets that are connected to webs of formal and informal agri-food networks are viewed through the lens of informality. The focus thus becomes the survivalist nature, the chaos and the illegality. This perspective misses the opportunity to understand the local food geography as an integral part of the local political economy, critical to the food security of poor residents and reflective of the same priorities as northern alternative food geography movements – as democratic, reflexive, and socially just (Abrahams, 2010).

Abrahams' (2010:206) empirical assessment of the Lusaka food system highlights the "trajectories of change and intersecting governances at work", which are time and place bound. Power is easily abused precisely due to the fragmented responses to food system changes and the inappropriate scales that are conceptualised and manifest. Alternatively, the principles that support local food geographies in the north could be heeded. Locally scaled and defined food security governance that is contextually developed has the potential to

embody the uniquely framed urban foodscape, drawing on the agency and food knowledge already in existence at that scale and directing it in support of local sustainable development.

3.5.5 Food security strategies, food system governance and lessons from urban literature

Conceptions of locally defined bottom-up governance processes speak from and to the urban south. Urban literature articulates the potential of inclusive urban development and its governance mechanisms: enabling of contextually based agency and recognising of the 'informal' processes poor urban residents engage in to access city resources and craft livelihoods. It is these informal urban livelihoods that often go against the grain of the imagined modern neoliberal city. However, this form of bottom-up tenacious urbanisation that persists is also often the driving force that creates and connects the network for materials to flow in the city (Swilling, 2011). This critically includes food. This network enhances equality and represents a more sustainable liveable urban system. Haysom (2014:26) states that: "The ability to participate in processes that enable the realisation of the interests of urban residents is central to the notions of liveable urbanism." The existing narrow food security discourse, which is often based on the premise of the imagined modern city where food flows through a commercially connected neoliberal system, misses what is highlighted in the urban discourse and that which is needed to transition to more inclusive and sustainable cities.

As Pieterse (2006:288) captures in the broader debates on African urbanism: "(t)he conceptual challenge therefore becomes to adopt an approach that recognises the structuring effect of the economy, bureaucracy and discursive diagrams of power without relinquishing an understanding of the saliency of agency." Learning from urban literature there is a significant need for alternative mechanisms to create appropriately scaled and integrated food governance that recognises urban food consumers as active agents. The aim would be to create an enabling environment for the individual and collective agency already in existence and one which is embodying of everyday food access. The foodways of the urban poor are bound by deeply gendered, relational and contextually shaped agency. Intricate acts of solidarity are evident in the everyday sharing of food between household food managers. Through the ethnographic readings of Lusaka's foodscape, forms of agency in solidarity emerged from participants and local neighbourhood market traders that speak to forms of collective agency in support of satisfying everyday needs. Scale-appropriate food security responses can encourage the agency that already exists.

These need to be defined by what works in urban residents' daily life negotiations, enhancing autonomy, meaningful identity creation, and the capacity to access food, feed families and lead purposeful lives.

3.6 Conclusion

The opening phrase of this article by Ruth, a central research participant, initiated this argument. As she alludes, the widely available food in Lusaka or an individual household's available capital assets are not translated into food without negotiation. Individual and collective agency is at work. Discriminative interactions occur at multiple scales throughout the food system. The connections reflect forms of power and differentiated capacities to negotiate everyday food security.

Viewing food security in Lusaka through the lens of those who negotiate it in the everyday opens up questions about the limited nature of food security responses; of the critical role of the local urban food system, its actors and its governance; and of what is being disregarded or obscured. It exposes the individual and collective agency at work in the everyday micro- and in-between spaces that sustain urban lives. This involves sharing in the relentless struggle against the routine and systematic processes of occlusion and inequality upon which the urban form is shaped. Intra- and inter-household-scaled decision-making abilities and reasoning intersect with the thick vibrancy of the urban structural environment. The food security outcomes embedded within these foodscapes are shaped by multiple sites of power and governance mechanisms.

Cities and regions play a major part in shaping a given food system and, in turn, its food security outcomes. Given the level of proportionate population increase in urban areas, structural poverty and inequality and the considered and yet critically under-researched levels of food insecurity in southern African cities, there is an urgent need to rethink dominant food security perspectives that are anti-urban biased. A new approach would need to bridge the current scalar gaps between national and agricultural food security perspectives, neoliberal (or developmental) market agendas and the consuming urban household unit on the receiving end. This paper aimed to shed light on the nuances of negotiating food (in)security at the inter- and intra-household scale in the contexts of engrained urban poverty and informality in Lusaka. And, in so doing, purposefully highlight that these everyday realities explicitly and implicitly connect to the broader food and urban system in deeper ways than what the current theory and praxis allows for. This speaks to the need for better contextually distinct food security approaches that understand, support and include the intersections between the locally scaled food system, the urban form and the urban agents who collectively affect and are affected by the fluid and inequitable system.

The qualitative research upon which this discussion draws speaks to the vignettes of everyday life that were observed at a particular time, with a particular group of individuals, within a particular space and sociocultural construct. This argument does not presume to present a

regionally comparable or prescriptive recommendation for urban food security. It purposefully refrains from offering suggestions for policy. The contextual reading of the Lusaka food terrain aims to open a different conversation for urban food security work. It thus engages with broader paradigms that surround an alternative conceptualisation of the urban food system. Central to the discussion is the notion of agency and of the appropriate scales at which agency is contextualised and drawn on in everyday food security negotiations. Any prescriptions for interventions within the current food security framings directly contradict the conception of agency and the contextual processes that are enabling thereof. This is based on the observation that food security policy situated within the same political-economic framings that currently exist and the continued aspirations for a neoliberal food system and the splintered African city that accompanies it, thus once again fail to systematically address food security issues.

4. Conclusion

The theoretical aim of this research project was to contribute to an identified gap in food security discourse. There is an urgent need for empirical contributions on specifically urban food insecurity. Little is understood about the dynamics and implications of the widespread hunger and malnutrition experienced in African cities and towns. There is increasing evidence of its severity (Frayne et al., 2010). There is also initial recognition of its complex determinants and implications (Joubert, 2012; Shrimpton & Rokx, 2012; Battersby, 2013; Battersby & McLachlan, 2013). In response, this dissertation presents a qualitative contextual discussion on the experiences of urban food (in)security in Lusaka, Zambia. It does so through the theoretical lens of the food system, grounded in the voices of actors who negotiate the food systems outcomes in a local place. The findings were induced through ethnographic research undertaken with an extended family living in an informal neighbourhood in Lusaka. Findings were substantiated by semi-structured interviews with players at different levels throughout Zambia's food system.

Two journal articles are presented in this dissertation. In its essence this work exposes the disconnections between the dominant metanarratives on food security in southern Africa and the reality of everyday food insecurity struggles. Food security is repeatedly presented from an availability perspective. In the case of Zambia, this is popularly referred to in terms of national maize production, farmer and agribusiness market access, urban farming, food fortification and nutrition programmes. The dominant focus on food availability has obscured, or allowed the occlusion of, the deeply embedded inequalities in food access, adequacy and agency. This study sought to provide a different narrative of urban food security to that portrayed in the limited discussion on the subject. It offered insights into the in-between spaces where daily food security is carefully crafted. Through the lens of a poor urban family at the scale of everyday life, food security is seen to be actively negotiated, shaped by the converging of time and place-bound relations and contextual circumstances. Many poor urban dwellers, in particular women as traditional food managers, everyday lives are intrinsically tied to, influenced by and in turn collectively influence, the local food system.

Article one (presented in chapter two) offers a 'thick' description of the nuances of crafting food security in a context of poverty and informality. It speaks to the everyday agency of poor urban residents and of the gendered relations involved in food management at the intra- and inter-household scale. The purposeful everyday actions that are involved in food security negotiations contain power, identity, and meaning. This everyday agency is created through, and implicated in, the accessing and sharing of food. The second article expands the scale of analysis discussed in article one. It combines the formed notions of the everyday agency of urban consumers and their efforts of actively crafting food security, with a conceptualisation of the multiple layers at which the food system works; of the different scales of actions and inequalities where food security is influenced and negotiated.

Understanding local food geographies and nuanced foodways of urban dwellers draws attention to the contextual ways people interact and co-produce the urban food system. It highlights the critical role that the food system plays within the city and its livelihood options. It exposes the systemic failings. It also adds weight to the call for a new way of viewing the localised urban food system and its food security outcomes. Lessons are drawn from literature on African urbanism that speaks to the future of African cities. Rather than re-inventing the wheel, these conversations describe the forms of bottom-up governance that could better support more sustainable, inclusive and responsive urban food systems.

In concluding this study and reflecting on its contribution to theory, I recall the daily being and conversations with the Phiri family and our explorations of Lusaka. I do not presuppose to provide solutions and policy prescriptions from this work, but rather to contribute to the discussion of the need to take back food and its control; affording those who have to negotiate food insecurity every day the space to craft a system that works with, rather than against, them. The modern African city has failed most of its citizens. Aspirations for a modern life are out of reach. The neoliberal system undermines livelihoods and household resilience, and has created a food system that is merely making people obese and sick, which reinforces the cycle of poverty in their families (Battersby & McLachlan, 2013). Raising household incomes would indeed have immediate effects in addressing the acute levels of food insecurity found. However, in order to address the enormity of the crisis, longer-term solutions are required that address the systematic causes of the failing food system and urban food inequalities. Those who are currently responsible for food security in the city, from its production to distribution to sharing within families, are most at risk from food system changes and have the most desire for a more inclusive and accountable system. It is these actors who also often understand the best workable solutions to making this possible.

It is clear that food – hunger, malnutrition and the workings of local and global food systems – are explicitly and implicitly laden with power dynamics. The concepts of power and food are explored in many different conversations. Recent food regimes analysis draws attention to the neoliberal food regime and its purposeful expansion into African markets. It explains the resulting loss of local control of all food system activities, of the evident increases in compromised diets and chronic malnutrition; as well as this regime's inherent unsustainable nature, its contributions to and threats posed by climate change. This illustrates how food security in developing nations cannot be achieved under the current neoliberal food regime (McMichael, 2000; 2009; Burch & Lawrence, 2009; Sage, 2013). The dualistic view of food security dimensions intersecting with the food system at national and household scales predominantly with a rural association turns a blind eye to what Abrahams (2010) describes as the 'multiple sites of power' that govern the local food system. These influence food security outcomes as well as the lived everyday experiences of food insecurity and urban residents' interactions with the local foodscape.

Food policy all but ignores growing urban food insecurity and patches up its flaws with food transfers and promises of technology (Crush & Frayne, 2011a). The feminist tradition has a long history of challenging the hegemonic powers embedded within the capitalist development system. Taking back the discussion to the 'first place' of experience – embedded within everyday lived experiences – opens up theoretical space for understanding the role of individual and collective agency, and the reality of dealing with power inequality. Food is power, both in its embodied form and in its control. Power inequalities are an intrinsic force within the global food system and determine millions of people's lives. Current food security approaches do exactly what the feminist movement challenges – the occluding of the strategies that marginal people in marginal places perform on a day-to-day basis to access food and craft meaningful lives.

Lusaka's food system compromises a multiplicity of meshed formal and informal value chains and webs of social relations. The urban food system is shaped by the intersecting governances of institutional powers and the ground-up throng of urban food system actors – 'informal' producers, distributors, carers and consumers. This messy system is about more than making food available in the city. It's about participating in order to earn a form of daily livelihood and feed children and it is about maintaining identity and creating daily purpose. Lusaka's food networks support spaces in which women are culturally allowed more autonomy and freedom, and the expression of agency. It represents desperate attempts to appease deep-seated hunger. The notion of 'food security' is all too often removed from the local place and the daily embodied actions it involves. This study purposefully explored food security from the scale at which it is experienced to re-ground it in everyday lives.

Recommendations for further research:

The dearth in research focused on urban food and on the multitude of issues relating to the food system in Zambia has been discussed at length in the thesis. The gap in literature was a key rationale for this research, which now offers one strand in the conversation within the Lusaka food systems conundrum. There is urgent need for new rigorous research. Firstly, to better quantify the extent of urban food insecurity in Lusaka and other urban centres. Secondly, there is much room for qualitative analysis and discussion of the underlying contextual social, structural and political-economic factors that underpin the quantitative figures.

Some of the key areas for further research include:

At a regional level

- Empirical research that maps the local food geographies and foodways of urban poor consumers in different contextual environments.
- The dimensions of food security dynamics at the intra-household scale.

- Research that uses everyday life as the departure point to inform food security agendas, crossing the boundaries of nutrition, urban, anthropology and social theories to explore the potential for integrated and bottom-up governance/policy formation.
- Empirical in-depth analysis of the relationships between food security strategies, levels of food (in)security and the local informal food system for poor urban residents.
- Investigations to determine the extent of the informal sector that comprises agrifood-related activities in specific local contexts and at different scales of analysis.
- A review and conceptual discussion of the interconnections and dynamics between the urban structural system and the urban food system in local food geographies.

<u>In Zambia specifically</u>

- Case study analyses that add to the conceptual discussion of the relevance of notions of alternative food networks, alternative food geographies and African urban food deserts (in the Lusaka, Zambia context)
- An investigation into the impact of the rapid changes and restructuring that are taking place in the agrifood system nationally and at the scale of the city (primary and secondary) on local

    a. informal food economies, and
    b. food geographies and poor urban residents' food security strategies.

- An investigation into the extent and scale of food system regulation (within 'formal' or 'informal' sectors) at both the national and urban scale in Zambia, in order to determine the potential for using food system governance as a tool to reduce food insecurity.

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